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The Shape of Things

RUMANIA PRESENTS A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF the meaning of Hitler's "new European order." Here is a country occupied by German troops, governed by men nominated and controlled by Berlin, that has been allowed to fall into a state of organized anarchy. Hitler cannot disclaim responsibility. The Iron Guard, which has usurped the functions of the police and instituted a reign of terror, is an organization inspired, fostered, and financed by the Nazis. Its killings are not the result of blind blood-lust but are carefully calculated. The prisoners shot in macabre ceremony over the open grave of Zelea Codreanu, himself the apostle of political assassination, are alleged to have been responsible for his murder. For other slayings there is not even this excuse. The victims include some of the most respected citizens of Rumania, the two most notable being Nicolas Iorga, famous historian, and Virgil Madgearu, economist and secretary of the Peasant Party. Their only crime was that they were anti-Nazi. Germany now has an excuse for increasing its garrisons in Rumania and when the time seems ripe may openly take over the government. But anarchy let loose is not easy to canalize. General Antonescu seems to have lost all authority, and the Iron Guard itself is split into factions, with its Green Shirt being used as a cloak for looting and private vengeance. Now an effort is being made to restore unity by playing up the Transylvania question. In his speech at Alba Julia, Antonescu talked of recovering the lands lost through the Dictate of Vienna. Hungarian reactions were sharp, and the enmity of the two newest Axis partners cannot be disguised.

*

THE PROGRAM OF GIVING ENGLAND ALL AID short of war made a giant stride with the resignation of Joseph P. Kennedy as Ambassador to London. An ardent champion of appeasement at the time of the Munich pact, Kennedy has since shown somewhat less flexibility on the subject than was displayed by the late Neville Chamberlain. Widespread reports that since his return to the United States Kennedy has been assuring everyone within earshot that England is through gained startling credibility when the North American Newspaper Alliance syndicated an account of an interview with the Ambassador by Louis M. Lyons of the Boston *Globe*. According to Mr. Lyons, Mr. Kennedy remarked that "democracy is finished in England" and "it may be here," that the appointment of Labor leaders to the British Cabinet spelled national socialism for England even if it won, and that talk of England's fighting for democracy was "the bunk." Even more remarkable was Mr. Kennedy's disavowal of the interview, in which he expressed his indignation and annoyance at Mr. Lyons's betrayal of an off-the-record confidence and vaguely charged him with "inaccuracy," but repudiated no single statement attributed to him. Kennedy has since branded as "nonsense" reports that he has been making anti-British statements, but he is careful to utter no word of hope or confidence in England and has announced his devotion to "the greatest cause in the world today"—that of keeping this country out of the war. Mr. Kennedy's appointment in London was inept, and his continuance at a post for which he obviously had no sympathy was an appalling blunder. His defeatist talk, calculated to discourage effective aid to Britain, appears to be rooted in a preference for the national socialism that Berlin would inflict on England over the "national socialism" which he painfully senses in the pronouncements of Labor Minister Ernest Bevin.

*

THE $100,000,000 CREDIT GRANTED TO CHINA by the United States is an overwhelming answer, both diplomatic and practical, to Japan's recognition of its puppet Nanking regime. With traffic moving over the Burma road without interruption from Japanese bombing planes, the $100,000,000 can soon be transformed into planes, trucks, and other vital sinews of war for Chiang Kai-shek's armies. Although the amount is only one-half of that asked for, it is four times as large as has ever before been granted to China. Japan's recognition of the Wang Ching-wei government could only have importance if it brought about further support for Wang either within China or among foreign nations. It has

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done neither. Chiang Kai-shek's prestige among the people of China in both the occupied and unoccupied sections is higher than ever before. And significantly enough, no other country has so far followed Japan's example in recognizing Wang. It is particularly interesting to observe that not even Germany and Italy—Japan's partners in aggression—were sufficiently impressed by the hoax to extend recognition to Wang's paper regime.

*

JAPAN'S CAUTION DESPITE UNPRECEDENTED opportunities for southward expansion continues to baffle many observers. Tokyo has protested against alleged discrimination in the Dutch East Indies and has brought pressure on Indo-China for new bases which would be useful in carrying out its avowed ambitions in the South Seas. But in a most uncharacteristic manner it continues to rely on diplomatic rather than military pressure. Some weeks have now passed since the evacuation of Japanese forces from Kwangsi and Shantung, a move obviously made in preparation for action elsewhere. But the troops remain concentrated at Formosa and Hainan, their commanders unwilling or unable to take advantage of the situation. This does not mean that the threat has lifted. On the contrary, it appears that the Indo-China authorities may surrender Saigon and make other important concessions without a struggle. Much of Japan's caution, however, is clearly due to apprehension regarding American policy. Reports of further important conversations between Under Secretary Welles and Ambassador Oumansky have doubtless had a sobering effect on the Tokyo militarists.

*

ALTHOUGH DEFENSE SPENDING IS STILL IN its preliminary stages it is already providing a tremendous stimulus to all forms of economic activity. More goods are being moved by the railroads, new plants are being erected and old plants refurbished, steel production continues at near-capacity and a dozen other industries are breaking all output records, factory employment is mounting, and the increase in consumer incomes is being reflected in rising retail business. The New York *Times* index of business activity for the week ending November 23 jumped sharply to 117, thus reaching an all-time high which compares with a previous top of 114.8 for the week ending June 29, 1929. National income is also getting within hailing distance of the 1929 level and in terms of goods and services is undoubtedly higher. The total for the current year is now estimated at $74 billion, compared with $78½ billion in 1929. It is true that this year's income must provide for a population some 7 per cent greater than in 1929, but this is more than compensated for by the greater purchasing power of the dollar. The fact that economic well-being is increasing not merely in spite of but because of expenditures which represent sheer economic waste is a paradox producing many headaches. The fact is that prior to the inception of the rearmament program we were failing to use something like 20 per cent of our potential productive capacity. In the coming year we may devote as much as half of that unemployed margin to defense purposes, but in so doing we shall create new purchasing power and make possible an additional rise in the total output of goods and services. Here is a lesson in the economics of abundance which, if thoroughly digested, can save us from the dreaded post-emergency depression.

*

A TROUBLED YEAR SEEMS TO HAVE COME TO an end in Mexico with the inauguration of Avila Camacho. His task will not be easy, but the fact that Henry Wallace, "good neighbor" *par excellence,* was chosen to represent the United States is the best guaranty that Almazán will attempt no serious insurrection, for the simple reason that it gave notice to his supporters in this country that attempts to foment revolt south of the border will find no sympathy in Washington. Washington's motive may be the selfish one of hemisphere solidarity and defense, but considering the past, it is a sign of progress in our Latin American policy when we land Henry Wallace instead of the marines.

*

THE PROPORTION OF SELECTIVE SERVICE registrants who are being rejected as unfit either by the draft-board physicians or the army medical examiners is hardly a good advertisement for the national health. Draft-board doctors in New York City, it is estimated, are currently rejecting 60 per cent of the men who come before them. And when the remainder are sent on to the army induction centers, where they receive a more rigorous examination, another 20 per cent are found below standard. The chief causes of rejection by the army examiners seem to be bad eyes and bad teeth, and while the causes of the former are largely unknown it is well established that many dental defects can be traced to malnutrition. We have no doubt that the army, needing only a fraction of the men eligible for the draft, is attempting to skim the cream and has devised correspondingly severe tests. Even so, the indication that something like two-thirds of our young men are not in first-class physical condition is disturbing. It is also proof that the best way in which this nation could invest some of its surplus capital would be in a really comprehensive health program.

*

THE DIFFERENCE IN STANDARDS BETWEEN draft-board and army doctors is causing a good deal of hardship to registrants who are accepted by the first but rejected by the second. After passing the draft board the

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potential recruit is given five days to resign his job and wind up his affairs. Only then does he have to submit to the final test—the army medical examination—and if he fails at this stage he finds himself in an awkward vacuum between army and civilian life. A good many men in this predicament are getting back their jobs, but this is not possible in all cases. Moreover, some of those affected are business or professional men who have closed their offices and must suffer loss in getting a new start. It ought to be possible to provide for better coordination between the two medical examinations or, failing this, to allow the draftee his five days of grace after the army doctors have rendered their verdict.

*

THE WHITE HOUSE TAX CONFERENCE THAT took place last week appears to have evolved a fairly complete and coherent policy for paying the costs of national defense. There will be no further increases in taxation on 1940 incomes, but a substantial boost in taxes is forecast for next year. While no effort will be made to defray the costs of rearmament on a pay-as-you-go basis, the regular budget will be balanced by a combination of increased taxes and enforced economies. Defense costs will be covered by borrowing, but the loans will be amortized over a definite period of years by the yield from special defense taxes. Although a detailed description of the new taxes is lacking, we have the President's assurance that a sales tax is not being considered. There is some discussion of strengthening the gift tax and increasing income and excess-profits tax rates still further. All of this is unquestionably in the right direction, but it would be still more encouraging if a real effort were being made to pay the costs of defense, to a considerable extent at least, by increased taxation. The burden of such taxes would of necessity fall upon the well-to-do. The money which is raised by loans will also come from this group, but since the loans must be repaid with interest they serve to strengthen the favored position of the wealthy at the expense of the general public. Moreover, regardless of precautions, borrowing under existing conditions is bound to lead to rising prices. These difficulties can be avoided by taxing the surpluses of the well-to-do instead of asking that they be lent to the government at a profit.

*

ONE OF THE DEFENDANTS IN THE FAMOUS Christian Front trials of last spring was Captain John T. Prout, Jr., accused of conspiring to overthrow the government and to steal munitions from a government armory. Prout was acquitted of the first charge, but the jury disagreed on the second, although he had confessed to having turned over a quantity of ammunition to William Gerald Bishop, a codefendant and alleged ringleader in the plot. The government has not pressed the theft-conspiracy charge, but Prout's confession compelled the army to bring him before a military tribunal, which has just acquitted him after a trial which was peculiar to say the least. The defendant denied the testimony he had given at his first trial and told his military judges that his confession had been obtained under duress by FBI agents at a time when he had been overworked and fatigued. This disavowal was accepted despite the fact that Prout's lawyer had admitted in open court that his client had given Bishop "about $40 worth of ammunition." The military trial itself proceeded in an atmosphere of fantasy. Two of Prout's fellow-officers who were called from Alabama to testify for the prosecution reported first to counsel for the defense. Major John J. Rhattigan, asked to testify on the stand concerning ammunition-supply records, could offer no help because he had "left his glasses in Alabama." Ordered to report back at another session, the Major sent the court a telegram saying he had "been ordered back" and couldn't come. Rhattigan was cited for contempt, but however cooperative he may decide to become as a result, Prout has already been cleared. It is impossible to say whether all this reflects merely the "code of honor" that prevails in army cliques or something more sinister. We should feel easier about the case of Captain Prout if the federal courts would finish their job and bring him again to trial.

*

MORE SENSATIONAL DECISIONS THAN THE ruling in the Chicago Milk Wagon Drivers' case have come from the Supreme Court in recent years, but none more clearly illustrates the changed character of that tribunal. The unanimous decision, written by Justice Black, indicates that after years of crusading against the evils of the labor injunction we finally have a Supreme Court that is in sympathy with their elimination. The labor provisions of the Clayton Act were meant to end "government by injunction," but they were nullified by the Supreme Court under Chief Justice Taft. The Norris-LaGuardia Act was passed by Congress in 1932 in an attempt to achieve what the Clayton Act had failed to do. The decision of the Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago in the Milk Wagon Drivers' case demonstrated that judicial interpretation could also emasculate the Norris-LaGuardia Act. The Circuit Court held that this fight of the A. F. of L. milk drivers against a "vendor" system that permitted price-cutting by exploitation of the labor employed was not really a "labor dispute" within the meaning of the Norris-LaGuardia Act. The Circuit Court also held that A. F. of L. picketing before the cut-rate stores was a secondary boycott and enjoinable under the anti-trust laws despite the Norris-LaGuardia Act. These wide loopholes were stopped up by the Supreme Court, which reversed the Circuit Court on both counts.

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What Price Glory?

WHEN with France *in extremis* Mussolini leapt on the Nazi bandwagon he undoubtedly believed that the war was over except for mopping-up operations and that the Italian armed forces would have little to do except take possession of the spoils of victory. At that moment it was not unreasonable to suppose that by clever timing he had won a new empire at minimum cost. There would be no need to expose the Italians to the privations of prolonged blockade, no need to test the devotion of the Italian army to the Fascist regime by hard-fought campaigns, no need to prove the validity of boasts that the Italian air force could chase the British fleet out of *mare nostrum*.

But empires are seldom acquired at bargain rates, and after seven months Mussolini must be wondering whether his abandonment of "non-belligerency" was really a clever move. Since entering the war Italy has had only one success—the capture of British Somaliland, a sparsely populated and unproductive colony. Its occupation has not made it possible to interrupt British commerce passing through the Red Sea and has served chiefly to thin the Italian lines in East Africa. Elsewhere in that region small portions of Kenya and the Sudan have been occupied, but these initial successes have not been followed up. The much more formidable threat offered by the Libyan army to the British forces in Egypt also bogged down after the capture of Sidi Barrani. It is said that General Graziani is waiting until he has consolidated his position and made his communications and water supplies secure. But these enterprises are constantly interrupted by the British fleet and air force, and meanwhile the army defending Egypt is being steadily reinforced.

In the Mediterranean the Italian navy has been kept on the defensive. It has suffered from attack in its chief base at Taranto, and it has been unable to carry relief to the garrisons of the Dodecanese Islands or to insure the sea communications of the army in Libya. No wonder that Mussolini, thirsty for glory, jealous of the triumphs of German arms, sought compensating victories in Greece. Lightheartedly his armies set out from Albania, assured that there would be no serious opposition. But once entangled in the formidable mountains of the Epirus they found they had stirred up a hornet's nest.

The amazing successes of the Greeks are due above all to their own spirited determination to defend their homes. They have been cleverly led by officers who seized every opportunity the terrain offered, and they have received invaluable help from the RAF, which prevented the Italians from establishing that air supremacy which is essential to a successful *Blitzkrieg*. The Italian armies, on the other hand, seem to have suffered from incompetent command and appalling intelligence work. With flanks unguarded they attempted to rush through the narrow valleys, only to find themselves cut off by hidden bands of mountaineers.

With some exceptions the Italian rank and file seem to have shown little stomach for fighting, and this has occasioned many jibes. We believe it is a mistake to make sweeping accusations of cowardice against the Italians. The truth is, not that they are afraid to fight, but that they don't want to fight. There is an individualistic inner core to Italians which resists regimentation, and they have never been taken in by Mussolini to the extent that the Germans have by Hitler. Italians are skeptical about military glory and intelligent enough to see that if the Axis wins this war Germany will collect most of the profit while Italy will be little more than a vassal state. They do not like the Germans; in fact, they dislike them far more than they dislike Britons or Greeks. That is one reason why Hitler cannot easily send reinforcements to aid his partner. The Italian soldiers might start to fight the Germans with an enthusiasm lacking when they tackle Greeks.

Times are hard in Italy. Prices are rising; staple foods grow scarce. Rumors of popular discontent filter through the censorship. For nearly twenty years Italians have been tightening their belts to forward Mussolini's imperial dreams. Have they now reached the last notch? Are they beginning to ask: What price glory?

The Missing Opinion

AS A result of I. F. Stone's Washington letter in last week's issue of *The Nation*, Senator Guy M. Gillette has introduced a resolution of inquiry. Senator Gillette's resolution would direct the Secretary of the Navy to make a report to the Senate showing all bids received and contracts awarded by the navy for the purchase of oil and gasoline since July 1. Mr. Stone's article revealed that on September 5 the navy opened bids on a half-million barrels of fuel oil. The low bid was 79 cents a barrel. The next bid was 87 cents a barrel. The high bid was 89 cents a barrel. The contract was awarded to the high bidder, Standard Oil. The low bidders offered oil processed wholly or partially from Mexican crude. Senator Gillette expressed the view that the purchase of oil from the high bidder under these circumstances unnecessarily added to the cost of national defense and endangered good-neighbor relations with Mexico.

The Gillette resolution is now before the Senate Naval Affairs Committee, headed by Senator Walsh. We hope the committee will order a hearing. It will find that until a few years ago the navy would have had no alternative but to accept the Standard Oil bid. Until the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1938, the annual navy sup-

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ply bills forbade purchase by the navy of "any kind of fuel oil of foreign production." But the navy sought an interpretation of this that would still enable it to purchase fuel oil of foreign origin, and the Judge Advocate General of the navy held that the words "fuel oil of foreign production" meant fuel oil processed abroad and not fuel oil refined in this country from foreign crude. The Comptroller General in a written decision of September 15, 1937, overruled the Judge Advocate General. At a result, on December 10 of that year Rear Admiral Charles Conard, then chief of the navy's Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, asked the House Appropriations Committee to drop the bar on foreign fuel oil from the then pending naval-appropriations bill for the next fiscal year. Admiral Conard said that in view of the Comptroller General's ruling, the clause barring foreign fuel oil might "prove definitely detrimental to the navy in . . . further restricting competition" on bids for naval oil orders. He said it would require "us to buy domestic fuel oil in all cases." This plea, made four months before Mexico expropriated its foreign oil companies, was successful. The provision was left out of the bill, and the navy deprived itself of the clear legal excuse it might have had to clamp an embargo on Mexican oil after expropriation.

Some mystery seems to attach to the opinion of the Judge Advocate General to which we have referred. When our Washington representative asked permission to read the opinion at the Navy Department, he was informed that it was not in the files. When he located a copy of the missing opinion at the office of the Comptroller General, he was told that he could not examine it without the permission of the Judge Advocate General. Permission was denied by the Judge Advocate General on the ground that the opinion was private. It seems strange that an opinion which was important enough to give rise to a public decision by the Comptroller General and which led to a change in the law affecting some millions of dollars' worth of naval purchases each year should be considered private.

The Nation believes that, other things being equal, domestic products should be given preference in government purchases but not at the expense of overcharging the public or endangering the good-neighbor policy. With the old provision against foreign fuel oil out of the way, ample leeway is afforded by our general "Buy American" law of 1933. Under it the domestic product need not be given preference if the price differential is "unreasonable" or such preference is contrary to the public interest. Standard Oil is no struggling infant industry. To reject the bids of companies using Mexican crude is to join Standard Oil and Dutch Shell in their world-wide boycott against Mexico. Senator Gillette is to be congratulated on his public spirit and courage in opening this whole subject to discussion in the Senate.

S. O. S. from Britain

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

THE President said the other day that American help for Britain had just about reached its peak; that our own needs and our present productive capacity fixed limits beyond which we could not go. Less than a week later, in the course of a startlingly frank debate in the Commons, responsible British officials revealed what was becoming evident even in the news dispatches—that Britain's situation is growing steadily worse under the downpour of German bombs and the attacks of raiders and submarines. Arthur Greenwood said that industrial progress had suffered a definite check as a result of the bombing raids, while the state of shipping was "much like April, 1917"—the most desperate point of the World War and the moment when the United States came in. He said that Britain was unable to replace its sea losses, in spite of increased production, and implied that its ability to import indispensable supplies of arms and food would depend upon additional tonnage from the United States. Lord Lothian's report on Britain's financial situation does not improve the picture. He asserted on his return from London during the same week that England's available funds for the purchase of war material were already running low and that financial aid would be necessary in 1941.

These statements reinforce what the censored news dispatches have recently been hinting. The collapse of the threat of an early Nazi invasion induced a temporary mood of relief and confidence on both sides of the ocean. But as the hammering attack has continued, it has become clear that Britain is engaged in a slow but inexorable retreat, and that only reinforcements large enough to bring its strength up to the heavily augmented strength of the Reich will halt this fatal process. If President Roosevelt is right, if American aid cannot be substantially increased, it is safe to predict that Britain will be defeated. Only a series of quick successes in the Mediterranean could avert this catastrophe by freeing important units of the fleet for the defense of shipping; but in spite of the brilliant counter-offensive in Greece, it cannot be hoped that the war in southern Europe and around the shores of the Mediterranean will be liquidated within the next few months.

If President Roosevelt is right. . . . But it is generally agreed that a British defeat would be a major disaster for the United States, one which we cannot allow to happen. And so it follows that American aid will be increased somehow, no matter what the President says. The alternatives are too grim to be contemplated: one is a desperate, last-hour military intervention to save Britain and prevent surrender of its fleet; the other is a war fought, after British defeat, against the strongest and most ruth-

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less combination of powers ever organized, a war in which our only allies would be nations weaker than ourselves and dependent upon us for protection.

Neither alternative is tolerable. Our only sane choice is to multiply our present aid to England at whatever cost. The President said he would be glad to have suggestions as to how it could be done. The William Allen White committee has offered several in a recent declaration of policy. To begin with, it believes that Congress should repeal laws prohibiting recruiting and enlistments for service in Canada. It urges that the President use his full legal powers in mobilizing industry "for a tremendous production" of war supplies. It recommends that Britain be equipped with as many merchant vessels as possible and that "the life-line between Great Britain and the United States" be kept open under all circumstances, and it demands a clear naval understanding between the two governments which will permit their fleets "to be placed in the most advantageous position to protect the Atlantic for the democracies." It is plain that this program would mean scrapping most of the provisions of our neutrality law, and this I think should be faced and accepted. At this critical hour the law should be amended at every point where it impedes our ability to increase our aid to Britain, whether of money or ships or arms. Those who still fear that an abandonment of our thin pretense of neutrality will automatically draw us into the conflict ignore two controlling factors: First, the dictators are not going to seek technical excuses for picking a fight with the United States; they will fight us only if they believe our entrance into the war will improve their chance of victory. Second, the only real hope of staying out lies, as the White committee says, in continued British resistance; all other risks are negligible compared with the risk involved in England's defeat.

The real crux of America's problem, however, is the supply of war materials available for export. It is true that the United States has enormously increased its shipments to Britain within the last few months; since the beginning of the *Blitzkrieg* our exports have tripled. But this figure is misleading and may deceive us into a false sense of accomplishment. It would provide legitimate comfort only if we could assume that Germany had been idle while our factories were multiplying their output. All evidence points to the opposite conclusion. Last year Hitler mobilized the entire reserves of Germany and conquered Poland for the campaign against France. This year he is transforming all the subject territories of Europe into an arsenal for the battle against Britain. A dispatch in the New York *Times* on November 10 said:

> The economic and financial situation in *occupied* territories at the beginning of winter is characterized as progressive adjustment of their economies to conditions prevailing in the Reich, according to information available here. . . . Production, planning, and marketing regulations along the Reich's highly developed pattern are the order of the day in all occupied countries. *Heavy industries in Belgium, Luxembourg, and France gradually are reaching production figures of the period preceding occupation.* (My italics.)

The best available figures indicate that Hitler is today drawing greater quantities of war materials out of the newly occupied regions alone than the United States is sending to England.

It is becoming more and more evident that sufficient timely help will go to Britain only if American production is put on a war footing, and that means one thing—the subordination of civilian consumption to the needs of the fighting machines. The President has recently ordered that the production of military planes be given priority over all commercial orders. This is the first hint of what will be necessary if Britain is to be saved from defeat.

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Mob Rule in Congress

BY I. F. STONE

Washington, December 2

THERE is no telling what Congress may do before the year is out. Normally, it would be safe to assume that no more legislation could pass at this session. But after the events of the past week prophecy would be hazardous. Senator Barkley and other Administration leaders were sure at the beginning of the week that the Logan-Walter bill to hamstring administrative agencies would not come to a vote. It passed the Senate on Tuesday. Senator Thomas of Utah, as chairman of the Senate Labor and Education Committee, is doing his best to act as a one-man dyke against a vote on the Smith amendments, but he may be overwhelmed at any time. Senator Taft of Ohio is still hoping to give them to the National Association of Manufacturers for Christmas.

The Senate is tired of reform; the House is in the mood for a lynching. Attorney General Jackson may have thought that he was acting as a lightning rod when he blamed the Vultee strike on Communists. He succeeded only in providing ammunition for the worst enemies of labor and the New Deal in the House. Rich of Pennsylvania was for putting the leaders of the Vultee strike in a concentration camp, and Cox of Georgia wanted an end made to the "coddling" of "outlaws." Hoffman of Michigan proposed that strikes be forbidden and labor conscripted. Moser of Pennsylvania chose the occasion to protest the amnesty given Kate Richards O'Hare after the last war and to ask legislation against "subversion seductively circulated by mail." Sumners of Texas showed himself better qualified to lead a mob than to head a Judiciary Committee of Congress. He wanted to get rid of "these rats," to give "that bunch of cutthroats . . . a double dose of their own medicine." Jerry Voorhis was the lone, if feeble, voice raised in defense of the Vultee strikers. "I think the House at the present time," Voorhis said, "is in a completely totalitarian frame of mind." The one-sided debate could not have been summed up more concisely.

The aviation manufacturers of this country held up production almost three months this year in a strike for higher profits and special tax privileges. The Vultee strike against a wage of 50 cents an hour lasted twelve days. There was no one in Congress to point the contrast. Indeed, the debate both before and after the settlement of the strike indicated that Messrs. Cox, Hoffman, Sumners, Moser, Rich, and their colleagues were motivated not merely by disagreement with the Third International. When Voorhis said that it would have been impossible to get the Vultee workers out on strike if they had not been making such miserably low wages, there were protests. Rankin of Mississippi jumped up to say that although he sympathized with "the laboring man" he found it "difficult to get excited over any crowd who is now striking to raise their wages above 50 cents an hour minimum, when the average farmer who toils in the sun in my district gets less than 10 cents an hour for his work." "Concentration Camp" Hobbs of Alabama rose at this point to contradict Rankin. He said that in his district the farm wage was closer to 5 cents an hour.

Costello of California voiced the fears of Douglas, North American, Consolidated, and Lockheed that the success of the Vultee strike may soon force them, too, to give up their present 50-cents-an-hour rate. After the Vultee strike was settled, Hoffman spoke with alarm of a pending drive to organize Ford and Bethlehem. "Is there," he asked, "back of this drive against Ford, against Bethlehem, a deeper purpose, a purpose to cripple and render ineffective our whole defense program? Is one of the objectives aid and comfort to Hitler by the slowing up of our industries?" Smith of Virginia indicated the real direction of this anti-labor trend. "We now have the official statement from the Attorney General," he declared, "that behind that [Vultee] strike is the 'red' hand of communism." The Communists, Smith continued, acted under the protection of labor unions and the labor unions under protection of the Wagner Act. The Wagner Act was the work of Congress. "So, Mr. Speaker," Smith concluded, "that brings us straight back to the proposition of where this trouble lies. We cannot lay it on the Administration. We cannot lay it on the labor unions. We cannot lay it on the Communists. It comes straight back to our door." Thus the moral of the Vultee strike is to get rid of the Wagner Act.

Our debt to Smith is not limited to this moment of candor. On Friday the most interesting piece of evidence the Smith committee has yet uncovered went into its records, albeit accidentally. We hope the Attorney General will study it carefully, for it indicates the rather loose definitions of communism on which the head of his Bureau of Investigation operates in investigating such strikes as that in Vultee. It was a letter sent by J. Edgar Hoover on November 14 to "Chairman" J. Warren Madden of the National Labor Relations Board. Madden at that time had not been chairman for almost three months. "I wish to advise you information has been re-

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ceived by this bureau," Hoover wrote, "to the effect that Grant Cannon, a field examiner connected with the National Labor Relations Board at St. Louis, Missouri, is known to have radical tendencies leaning toward communism. It is further reported that Cannon has studied anthropology and has been affiliated with the National Labor Relations Board for three years. It was also reported that Cannon visited Mexico City, Mexico, to observe the Presidential election in that country in July, 1940." J. Edgar Hoover was head of the General Intelligence Division when it investigated as "communistic" the 1919 strike to end the twelve-hour day in steel. This letter indicates that he is still far from being a safe authority on the subversive.

The prospects here are not encouraging. The resolution under which the Dies committee is operating expires with this Congress, and the Administration is attacking the Dies pot as a detractor of the FBI kettle. But the Texas demagogue, though heartily disliked in Congress, has become too powerful to be stopped. In the War Department, while Secretary Stimson makes pro-labor speeches, contracts continue to be awarded to Wagner Act violators; a $2,000,000 order for trucks and passenger cars that has just gone to Ford might have been awarded to General Motors, which is obeying the Wagner Act. The only hopeful news of the week was the appointment by Sidney Hillman of a so-called stabilization committee for the shipbuilding industry, representing A. F. of L., C. I. O., employers, the navy, and the Maritime Commission. This may help to eliminate not only strikes but jurisdictional disputes, for Harvey Brown of the Machinists and John P. Frey of the Metal Trades, as well as John Green and Philip Van Gelder of the C. I. O. Marine and Shipbuilding Workers' Union, are on the committee. Boards of this kind might play a useful role in all defense industries, and it is hoped that a similar one may be set up soon for aviation. If such a board could succeed in eliminating 50-cent wage rates in aviation without strikes, it would break the hearts and spoil the plans of the "Goober" Coxes.

Make America Produce!

[*From different points of view the two articles that follow approach the problem of getting the most out of America's productive capacity with the least sacrifice of individual liberty. Mr. Strauss is concerned primarily with the philosophical implications of the problem; Mr. Noyes with techniques. Inevitably there is a certain amount of overlapping in the articles, but we trust our readers will agree with us that this extended treatment is more than justified by the overwhelming importance of the subject and the provocative nature of the analyses.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

Liberty Is Divisible

BY HAROLD STRAUSS

MORE and more it becomes apparent that what is at stake in the world today is liberty. Everyone wants more production—Hitler, Churchill, Roosevelt, Willkie, Stalin—but no one has found a way of achieving greater production without the sacrifice of some liberty. Hitler has shown us that where there is authority, production can be commanded. By establishing a centralized authority with full power to allocate all raw materials and all labor, Germany has achieved what still must seem a miracle to the capitalists who predicted bankruptcy and the radicals who predicted revolution. If America is to outstrip Germany we too must yield some of our privileges to central authority. But we must do so under the persuasion of justice and morality rather than under the compulsion of violence and brutality. The problem is one of liberty.

Liberty is divisible. When we make emotional generalizations we do not seem to understand that, but in practice we are quite successful in dividing off certain areas of behavior in which we submit to discipline. A man is clearly capable of agreeing to surrender his liberty of action for specified periods and in specified spheres. Few are foolish enough to believe that traffic regulations are tyrannical. Few refuse to obey the orders of a physician.

Civil liberties in the surviving democracies are codes of behavior that were worked out in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries at the cost of much agony. The religious wars eventually produced freedom of worship. The overthrow of feudalism produced freedom of contract and the common safeguards of person and property. The English, French, and American revolutions produced freedom of speech and assembly, and the concept of representative government.

These various traditional liberties were fought for largely in a period of handicraft economy. At that time the artisan at his bench was substantially his own master. He had freedom to produce or not to produce as he chose, and his choice helped or hurt few but himself. The demand for his goods was almost always greater than the supply, and he had merely to decide, according to his appetites and desires, what part of the day he would labor and what part not.

When the Founding Fathers or the great French

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political philosophers contemplated the problem of economic liberty, they were only interested in removing the shackles from trade and in gaining the liberty of laissez faire for merchants, manufacturers, and shippers. The problem of freedom for the little men, the artisans and factory hands, was of no urgency. When atrocious working conditions were brought to light, it was thought that their improvement could be safely left to the humanitarian impulses of the mill owners. Thus we are unsupported by tradition when we attempt to solve the problem of individual liberty within a modern economic system, a problem which is the grandchild of the Industrial Revolution and the child of mass production.

Numerous liberal writers have proclaimed that we must have economic and social democracy as well as political democracy. But we haven't even the beginnings of an economic morality, which is the necessary precursor of a systematic code of rights, prerogatives, and duties in the economic field. It is only because such a code has been worked out and widely accepted in the political field that we have political democracy. When liberals speak of economic democracy they are evidently thinking of some better and more humanitarian world in which the worker would not be oppressed and in which he could buy back the fruits of his labor. But if by those words they mean diffused control from below or uncoordinated freedom of enterprise, there can be no such thing in an industrial civilization based upon mass production. If they mean to call for economic justice through the instrumentality of political democracy, let them do so, and not suggest that an assembly line can be anything but authoritarian.

Lenin found that out. He learned that engineering problems could not be solved by a vote of factory soviets. After a few months of experiment his quixotic quest for economic democracy ran smack into the iron law of the assembly line. Coordination of work and centralization of authority are absolute prerequisites of production. The pyramid of authority within a single factory is obvious to anyone who cares to see it. The unskilled workers must keep perfect pace with one another. Over them is a foreman, who is governed by the delicate problems in timing which are the essence of an assembly line. Even a foreman has little freedom of action. The over-industrious foreman who produces two extra automobile frames per hour, while the body and motor assemblies move along at the established pace, will be poorly rewarded. The foremen are responsible to plant superintendents, and the superintendents to company heads. Within single companies the pyramid of authority is indisputable.

This is no accident of the capitalist system. It has nothing to do with profits, wages, or ownership of the means of production. The same structure will be found where production has been socialized. It is the inevitable result of factory production, however the factory be owned or used. For what, in essence, is factory production? It is a technology based upon the division of labor, a technology which displaced handicraft methods because of its efficiency. Handicraftsmen had no need of a factory. But when the production of a single article was divided among specialized workers, these workers had to assemble under one roof and submit to coordination. The famous Chapter II of Book I of "The Wealth of Nations" still serves as the best demonstration that it is not machinery but the division of labor that is at the heart of the factory system.

The economic aspects of the division of labor are well known, but the social aspect has been unaccountably neglected. Quite apart from profit and efficiency, any division of labor immediately creates the problem of synthesizing production. Someone has to be responsible for this synthesis, and responsibility is wedded to power. It was this rude fact which caused the "classless" Soviet Union, after it had shot its old middle class, to produce a new one composed of technicians, engineers, and bureaucrats.

If the pyramid of authority is required within a single factory, it is also required within an industrial system as a whole, whether such a system be nation-wide or world-wide. The same problem in timing exists between specialized factories as between specialized workers in a single factory. In the past, industry has tried to operate without recognizing this, or it has rationalized the self-corrective efficacy of laissez faire, and it has paid the penalty of cyclic crises, which may be said to be the result of trying to operate without a foreman. The very language of capitalism—risk, venture capital, profit and loss—acknowledges this anarchy. The division of labor which has made it almost impossible for the individual to provide himself directly with the goods of life is at the root of the desperate necessity to coordinate production, to establish a foreman over factories, or, in a word, central authority over all men at work.

Capitalism has refused to recognize this openly. But in point of fact the techniques of mass production, with the huge "tooling-up" expenses that they involve, place individual company heads under constant and enormous pressure toward centralization, giantism, and monopoly. Monopoly is merely central authority in the interest of the few; it can be made to serve the interest of the many. The trend is powerful and mechanical. We cannot return to the society of farmers and independent enterprisers that Jefferson dreamed of. Henry Ford's physical dispersion of his plants does not in any way relax his central authority over them. The drive toward monopoly is inherent in the processes of mass production.

Productive efficiency is an engineering problem that, in its physical aspects, has been substantially mastered. But we have scarcely begun to study the social, moral, and political consequences of this mastery. How can we make the fullest use of the genius of the engineers? This

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confronts us with the problem of motive, or incentive, as the Republicans like to call it. We are just beginning to learn that we must get things done whether they are profitable to business or not. The profit motive does not make men produce enough. The cooperative motive does not make men produce enough. Humanitarian motives are more talked about than actual. Only war drives men to total production, and that is our tragedy. Why can we not produce for peace as we produce for war? We know how to produce enormously, but only in war, driven by fear, do we delegate the necessary authority. Only in war do we give someone the right to *command* production.

Hitler has been commanding production for seven years. He has been producing for use—however vile that use may be. Need I dwell on the results? The productivity of Germany today is something that only a few thick-goggled economic theorists ever dreamed of. Does that mean that Hitler is right? Does that mean that an industrial society must be Nazi? Emphatically not. The Hitler who wrote "Mein Kampf" knew little about productive efficiency. But the Hitler who rules Germany is not the Hitler who wrote "Mein Kampf." He has been molded by the discipline of machine technology, which is no respecter of what Engels would have called the superstructure of ideas. Hitler has done what he had to do to maintain himself in power; he has not necessarily understood the issue. He himself is the product of underlying forces. He arrived on the scene in Germany because Germany was both industrialized and sunk in depression. Human beings will not long tolerate a situation in which their factories refrain from producing for bookkeeping reasons. Sooner or later they will burn the books—fiscal as well as literary.

Hitlerism is a blind, brutal reaction from a living death. In searching for a means of establishing a central authority over production, it has made a fetish of authority, and placed its shackles on all institutions within the society it controls. Hitlerism is a violent, unintelligent rebellion against the inadequacies and cruelties of capitalism. It is not counter-revolution but the perversion of the revolution against capitalism. Racism, nationalism, hero-worship, Nordic gods, militarism, mysticism —all these are merely embellishments to catch the eye and enlist the support of the people.

The issue is still one of liberty. In the democracies we cling to the fatal error, inherited from the nebulous bloom of eighteenth-century ideals, of believing that the individual need pay no more than lip-service to society. We stand upon our ancient rights; we wrangle and dispute; we try to cut the same small cake of production into more pieces. (It is this that has vitiated the effectiveness of many labor unions.) Hitler revolted against the consequences of this situation, but he did not see its roots. He had to increase production, and to do so he established agencies with the power to command production. He had to force his people to assent to the authority of these agencies, and to do so he swept *all* liberty away. Because the house was cold, he burned it down.

We now have the bitter knowledge that production for use is not enough. We must determine the kind of use to which production is to be put, and that is a task for social morality. While we are delegating authority to command production, we must also, *by democratic processes,* decide from day to day and from hour to hour what we will do with our goods. If the people choose to send food to Europe one day and battleships the next, that is their right. But we must *have* the food, and we must *have* the battleships. Production must be commanded; we can no longer afford to leave it to such hazy motives as profit and patriotism—or to whatever motives inspire our balky aircraft manufacturers.

The actual ownership of the means of production no longer matters much, for the experience of England shows that most of the fruits of ownership may be taxed away. Because of sheer lack of interest on the part of the owners, a lack of interest that they are already proclaiming, title will some day come to rest in the state. What still matters is the impulse to produce, and after that the disposal of the product. For a gradual solution of the second problem we have still time; in fact, the New Deal has made a strong beginning. But there is no time to spare in getting the wheels of production turning. Here the New Deal has in general relied too much upon subsidizing consumption. This stimulates demand, but does not, owing to technological factors demonstrated by the TNEC, encourage new production. A better method is found in such agencies as the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Port of New York Authority, the National Defense Advisory Commission, and other better, more pacific, and as yet non-existent "authorities." The word "authority" is not idly used in some of these titles, for authority is needed. The people, acting collectively, can open many new channels of production that are not inviting to private capital. Because we do not realize the implications of this method there has been intense political bickering over the activities of New Deal agencies. We must rationalize the method and extend it, so that the performance of these agencies can be gauged by positive engineering criteria rather than by metaphysics and superstition. We are able to do this successfully in war time, or under the fear of war. Before we do it in peace we must make at least a tentative settlement of the rights and liberties and duties of the individual in the sphere of modern economy. That these have not yet been settled is apparent from the bleatings of business, which, while it makes the second-largest profits in its history, would have us know that it has no confidence.

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The issue is economic liberty. If we try to retain the anarchic truculence of capitalism, we too shall be plunged into National Socialism, which disposes of anarchy by substituting tyranny. Only when all authority is feared does an explosive situation develop; then society is convulsed and power is seized by violence. The act conditions those who take the power. But the authority I speak of need not be tyrannical, need not even be bureaucratic. There is no good reason why powers held to be necessary in the public interest cannot be democratically conferred, democratically controlled, and, if necessary, democratically revoked. It is easier to safeguard society against abuses of power than to dispense with all power. It is true that this program means a curtailment of individual liberty; but the best we can make of our liberty is to sign it away intelligently within specific economic spheres and for specific economic purposes, as every civilized person has already learned to do in other spheres and for other purposes. For liberty, which has been divided so often, is still divisible.

The Economics of Freedom

BY CHARLES E. NOYES

WHEN the Constitution of the United States was adopted, the right of individuals to own and control private property was inevitably regarded as an essential safeguard of freedom. One of the chief causes of the American Revolution had been arbitrary interference with property rights in the colonies through taxation without representation. But the constitutional guaranties of private ownership of the means of production had a dangerous corollary which, until the twentieth century, was generally overlooked because it was so rarely exercised. That was the right of owners to keep the means of production idle, or to operate them far below capacity levels. The owners of money savings also have the right, seldom used until recent years, to keep their money idle in banks instead of investing it to increase the total means of production. The right of private owners of mines, factories, and money to go on strike, whether consciously as a protest against labor unions and government policies or automatically because the opportunities for profit in production or investment do not seem worth the risks, is obviously a threat to the general well-being of any nation in which it is exercised; when the nation has to face the possibility of war, every idle machine and every idle dollar which could conceivably be used to increase total production diminishes by that much the nation's strength for defense. This holds true not merely for the production of armament, but for the production of all types of goods which people need to convince them that their country and its economic system are worth working and fighting for. There are no longer any limits to the scope of total defense.

Idle men, machines, and money in the United States must be put to work if this country is to be made strong internally and externally. But the methods used to put them to work are of vital importance if the goal is the preservation of freedom. One method—the one which was used during the last war and is chiefly relied upon now by the National Defense Commission—is bribery. Most industries will attain maximum production rapidly enough if it is made sufficiently profitable. This method is not so bad as most liberals believe, particularly when the funds are obtained by borrowing, though it postpones the decision as to who will pay for armaments. The money may be acquired in part later by virtually confiscatory taxation of the profits which are now being lavishly provided.

Unfortunately, however, the government is not in a satisfactory position to bribe the producers of consumers' goods to achieve maximum production, although it has attempted to do this for the last eight years by pouring out government funds in the form of relief and by making government loans available at low interest rates through the RFC. As things stand now, it seems certain that a critical danger point will appear when the increased consuming power in the hands of workers in the arms industries starts a rise in the price of consumers' goods. Some government economists have predicted that full employment and full use of present productive capacity may be reached in 1942.

When that happened during the last war, it resulted in an inflationary cycle of rising wages and rising prices which gave large profits to relatively few people, did little or nothing to improve the standard of living even at the time, and led to a severe post-war deflation and depression. When it happened in Germany in 1935, the Nazi government applied rigid government controls to wages, prices, and production—controls which have formed the economic pattern of the totalitarian state. (It is important to remember that Nazi economic controls were developed for the specific purpose of counteracting the inflationary tendencies of the German arms program; while they were consistent with the political theories of National Socialism, they were not foreshadowed by anything the Nazis said before they came to power, and it seems most likely that they were instituted to meet an actual condition rather than as an arbitrary grab for power.) The same condition might easily lead to the same result in the United States. At the first signs of inflation, price controls will almost certainly be demanded by the people; and if the American arms program then continues to supply more purchasing power than can be satisfied by the available supply of consumers' goods, some form of wage control will inevitably follow. In that case we can only hope, without too much optimism, that these totalitarian controls will be relaxed when war or the threat of war is over.

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This danger can be avoided only if the production of consumers' goods is increased fast enough to keep pace with the increasing amount of wages paid in the arms industries. But the owners and managers of factories which produce consumers' goods will not want to keep pace, because that would prevent the rise in prices and the rise in the margin of profit to which they are already looking forward. Of course they might make larger total profits if they increased production at present prices; but entrepreneurs seem to be temperamentally incapable of acting that way.

Nevertheless, the chance of preserving individual freedom in the United States depends to a very large extent upon expanding production in all sectors of the economy, and that chance must not be left to the choice of narrow-minded entrepreneurs. On the other hand, rigid government control of prices, production, and wages would in itself involve a dangerous sacrifice of freedom. And a broadside attack upon our present economic system, whether or not it might be theoretically desirable, and whether or not it might solve fundamental problems if successful, would lead to bitterness and disunity, which we cannot afford so long as there is actual danger of war.

The economic problem of the United States, therefore, is to find an escape from the dilemma of inflation or totalitarianism within the framework of our present political and economic systems. Those who consider the present systems beyond saving may prefer to take a chance on what might come after defeat in war, or after an American Munich, which will certainly be unavoidable if we are confronted by the demands of a foreign coalition which has clearly superior military power. Some might even welcome inflation or what they hope would be a temporary totalitarianism. But either inflation or temporary dictatorship must have after-effects almost as dangerous to free democracy as actual military defeat. No matter what road we take, the demobilization of our present arms program will involve readjustments very hard to make without violent upheaval. Because of population changes and especially because of the steadily declining proportion of farmers, the United States is now much more deeply affected by industrial prosperity or depression than it was in 1914 or 1919. The faith of the people in their institutions has been shaken during the last ten years, and it is doubtful that democratic capitalism could survive another period of sudden deflation. Yet such deflation will be inevitable when the government stops buying guns unless far-reaching plans to prevent it are prepared and adopted in advance.

Fortunately, the government of the United States has a power to coerce business which is both constitutional and traditional, even though it provokes howls of anguish whenever it is used. That is the power to tax. If the people can be made to realize that their safety demands the maximum production of which we are capable, of all kinds of goods, they will enthusiastically support a tax program to reward increased production which does not raise prices while it penalizes both restriction of production and price increases. The idea of rewarding increased production by tax benefits was proposed a year and a half ago by the conservative Senator Vandenberg of Michigan; the idea of penalty taxes aroused a storm of misrepresentation and slander when it was embodied in the form of a tax on undistributed corporate profits, but if it were clearly related to national defense, it could be put through again.

The form of such a tax program would require expert study, and would undoubtedly contain complicated difficulties. Nevertheless, it offers a politically practicable way of adjusting our economy to the strains to which it is increasingly being subjected. The problem, once again, is to expand all types of production simultaneously with the manufacture of armaments in order to avoid the risks of inflation or of totalitarian control of prices, production, and wages. This problem can be solved within the framework of our existing institutions by tax legislation which will reward increased production and penalize idle machines and idle dollars. Action is necessary now if we are to retain our freedom to work out our long-range problems in our own way.

For the long run, the economic bases of freedom will require many further readjustments. Public ownership of the means of production may eventually be desirable, but for reasons of politics and defense it cannot be considered an immediate possibility; and the example of Russia indicates that, whether or not it is ultimately desirable, it does not automatically solve all problems either of economics or of freedom. Much more important than ownership are control and the policies of those in control; this is already true in the United States as well as in Germany and Russia.

Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution capitalist democracies have relied upon the automatic operation of the free market to chart the course of economic development. While it worked and in so far as it worked, the free market was a democratic process, rewarding those who gave the public what it wanted at prices the public could afford, penalizing those who did not. For many reasons, some of them resulting from technological discoveries and the decrement in population growth, some of them resulting from the deliberate organization of monopolies, the free market has almost ceased to exist. In spite of Thurman Arnold's praiseworthy efforts, it seems doubtful that it can ever be restored to full, automatic, and successful operation.

Ultimately, the economic organization of society will be consciously planned, simply because it can be. The elimination of unavoidable scarcity and the possibility of abundance for all provide the opportunity to choose what

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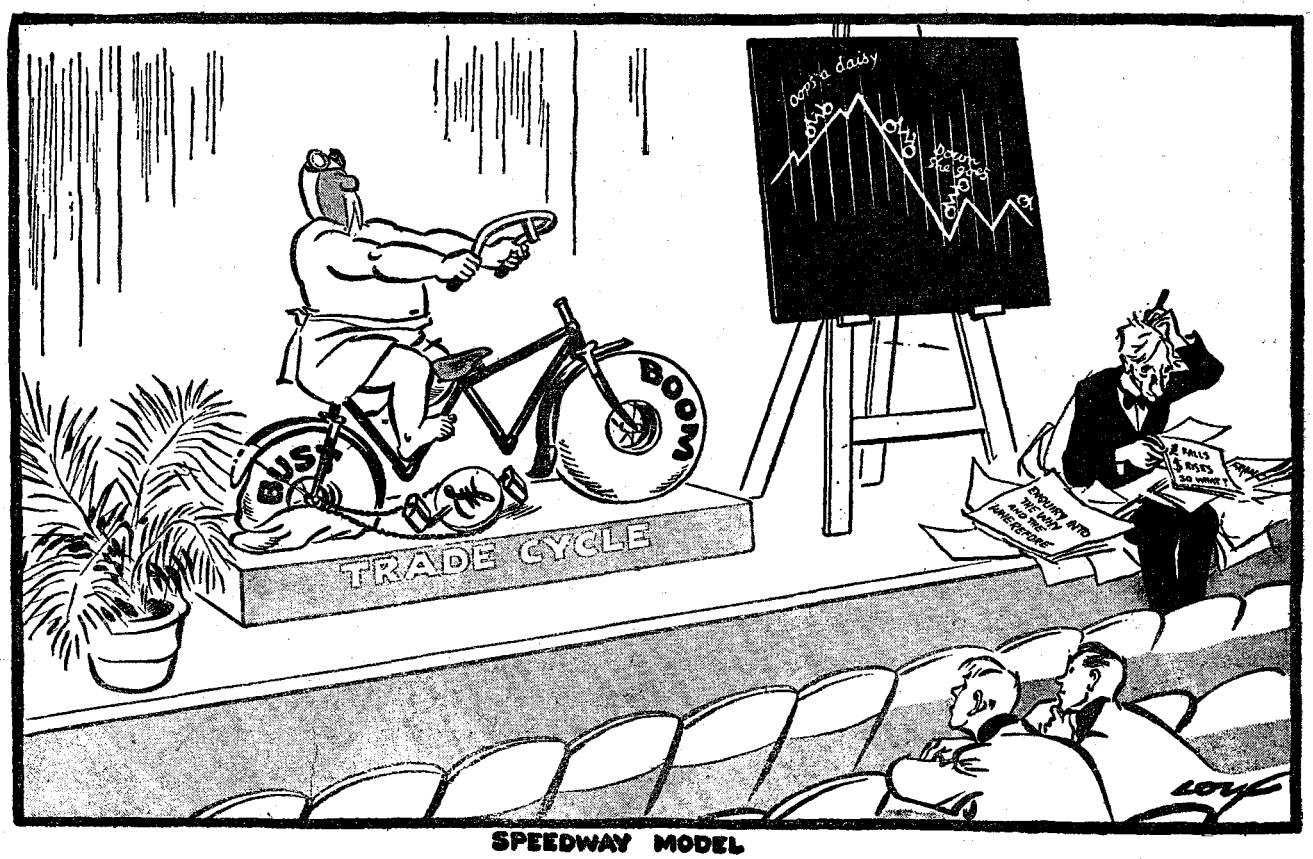
goods shall be produced, and how they shall be distributed, beyond the bare necessities for living. There is also an opportunity to choose how much time and energy men will devote to the production of goods, how much they prefer to devote to leisure occupations. Once production has reached a point which provides a universally acceptable standard of living, these choices will be the most important ones which a free people can make. Democracy, if it continues to exist and have meaning, must respond to a genuine expression of the popular will in the economic field. Up to now, American politics has been concerned chiefly with the relative advantages obtained from the government by various groups of citizens through high or low tariffs, public-land and monetary policies, the presence or the absence of government controls over business, and, more recently, through relief payments, benefits to agriculture, and the protection of the rights of organized labor. For some time these issues will continue to be important, but as the struggle over the distribution of an insufficient quantity of goods is superseded by the question of how much and what kinds of goods people want to produce, the democratic process must operate in new ways.

The opportunity for conscious choice implies conscious planning, and it will be difficult to obtain the benefits of long-range planning while leaving control over the plans in the hands of a citizenry which may change its mind from month to month. That difficulty gives a temporary advantage to totalitarian states which do not have to bother about democracy. It can be solved, however, if we have time, by the democratization of planning authorities, by dividing our economy into its natural segments and giving a fair measure of popular control to the citizens most directly concerned with each segment. Such a process is exemplified by public referendums on the use of Tennessee Valley Authority power; it might be extended by allowing the citizens of the Tennessee Valley to elect the members of the Authority and to express their opinion of the Authority's policies. A considerable degree of national coordination of the policies of regional-planning authorities will be necessary, but it is not necessary to give the federal government arbitrary, supreme authority. The federal government should act as a clearing-house, if necessary as an arbitrator; if the members of planning authorities were elected locally and regionally, they would provide a check on the arbitrary exercise of federal power which would be of the essence of democracy, without detracting too much from the benefits of over-all planning. On the contrary, they would guard against the operation of the law of diminishing returns, which always limits the efficiency of too much centralization.

First, however, we must achieve the maximum production of which we are capable with our existing plant, and we must expand our productivity with the greatest possible speed. Nothing less will create the conditions which are essential to the preservation of freedom against the threats of internal disunity and external attack. The



SPEEDWAY MODEL

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taxing power is the strongest method which a democratic government can use at the present time to direct its economic life. But taxes on monetary wealth and monetary income are not enough. Real wealth consists of raw materials and the means of production. Real national income is the total volume of production. It follows inevitably that an honest program for conscripting wealth in a time of national emergency is a program for increasing production. And when the very independence of the nation may depend upon speeding the production of defense materials and simultaneously giving the people who may be soldiers a stake which they consider worth defending, every effort should be concentrated upon production without much regard to money costs or the distribution of money payments so long as most of the people have things to buy and money to buy them. If the production of consumers' goods is increased sufficiently, while large sums are being paid in wages to the workers in arms factories, both prices and distribution will to a very considerable extent take care of themselves. In practice, most corporations would find, as they almost invariably have found in the past, that increased production at lower prices would actually increase their profits. Perhaps enough of them might get used to the idea to enable capitalism still to function, at least partially, in a world of potential abundance, and some freedom of private enterprise might be preserved as a check against totalitarian government. But there can be no possible doubt that the present political and economic organization of the United States will disappear if it fails to achieve the maximum production which modern technology makes possible. We are already vastly outnumbered in manpower by Hitler's Greater Germany. Only the fullest possible use of our superior natural resources and potential productivity can save us, whether the actual danger takes the form of military attack or a demand from the dissatisfied citizens of our own country that we should imitate a system which has had so much apparent success.

Chungking Shows the Way

BY CRISPIAN CORCORAN

Chungking, October 24

THE fog that clothes the upper Yangtze for eight months of every year has descended once more on Chungking. After having been bombed by a total of more than three thousand Japanese planes in the sunlit interval between June and September, the city is taking up again its normal way of life. Not that Chungking was ever paralyzed. The various branches of the government remained in the capital throughout the summer, adjusting their hours so that very little working time was lost, even at the height of the raids. The new factories strung out along the banks of the Yangtze and the Kialing also continued production—and somehow managed to escape most of the projectiles aimed at them. Although there were days when every ceiling in the city rained plaster from the blasts of hundreds of tons of high explosives dropped at once, when every street had its new ruin and the whole sandstone bluff on which Chungking is built belched fire and smoke like a many-cratered Vesuvius, the casualties were few and morale remained high. This was because the alarm system here is completely reliable. And so are the dugouts—deep shelters tunneled through the soft stone bowels of the city, capacious enough to house its every inhabitant and numerous enough to be readily accessible from its every part. These, not "fanatical courage" or "Oriental fatalism," have enabled the population to emerge completely unshaken from its three-month trial by fire. The Chinese government has many sins, but it has never rationalized greed into theoretical objections to deep raid shelters as did the Tory majority in Britain's Parliament. Today, with ten thousand dead in London, a British air mission is studying the amazingly effective system of bomb protection evolved by the backward Chinese, "learning" here what it might have learned from Barcelona a good three years ago.

The clouds are overhead once more, and Chungking is a busy hive of reconstruction. In many sections the ruins are being removed, and new blocks of flats are going up. Plans for the rebuilding of this medievally chaotic city are being pushed unceasingly, now hindered, now helped by the bombs of the enemy. In the past few weeks the raiders have come seldom, but the tortured rock of Chungking continues to shake and strain with incessant explosions—tons of dynamite blasting out more shelters, underground storehouses, straight arterial roads, and a new river front along the vertical Yangtze shore with its hundreds of slippery, barely negotiable steps of rough-hewn stone.

This is the appearance and atmosphere of China's temporary capital as the country stands before the most difficult complex of problems it has faced since the beginning of the war. Today, naturally, the international situation is of first importance. The gloom that attended the closing of the Burma road three months ago has been succeeded by joy over its reopening, and over the new

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prospects of Anglo-American action against a Japan allied to the European Axis. This favorable turn in the world balance strengthens the argument of the consistent partisans of resistance, who point to it as proving that all things come to him who helps himself. But it has not brought satisfaction of their demand that the government formulate a definite foreign policy. The less responsible elements in the bureaucratic machine, those who all through the war have fluctuated between exultation and defeatism, who wanted "impartiality" between the Rome-Berlin Axis and the status quo powers in 1937 and 1938, immediate entry into the Allied bloc at the outbreak of hostilities in Europe, and rapprochement with Germany after its dazzling summer successes, are now basking in the pleasant delusion that the new alignment in the Pacific will automatically bring an early victory—and speculating on the possible benefits of formal entry into the European war. Because these fluctuations have been reflected in the Foreign Affairs Ministry, the country's international policy has only echoed outside developments and failed to develop the initiative for which there are now so many opportunities. Relations with the Allies and the Axis have depended on the actions of the powers. Relations with the Soviet Union are cordial on geographical grounds and because of the importance of Soviet aid—but otherwise stagnant. The passivity of the Foreign Ministry has been criticized by all groups interested in the more vigorous prosecution of the war—by the anti-Japanese militants in the Kuomintang such as Feng Yu-hsiang, Yu Yu-jen, and Sun Fo, by the National Salvation League, by the Communists, and by officers of the army.

The military situation has been dependent, during the past few months, on the diplomatic; the movements of the Japanese in China having been subsidiary to their concerns elsewhere. This has resulted in complete stalemate on a number of fronts. It has dispelled, temporarily or permanently, the threat of a major enemy offensive directed against Chungking itself—a threat that began to materialize after the collapse of Ichang last June. The immediate menace of a Japanese advance from Indo-China appears likewise to be slight. General confidence has been heightened by the success of counter-attacks in North China, where the Eighth Route Army spectacularly severed no less than five Japanese-operated railways and destroyed the largest coal mine in Shansi. In southeastern Shansi the central forces recaptured Chincheng and after heavy fighting broke the Japanese front. Another military development worth mentioning is the plugging of the hole in China's defenses represented by the province of Yunnan. This was accomplished by the advance of Chiang Kai-shek's own divisions to the Indo-China border, which eliminated the last autonomous war-lord fief on Chinese soil and put an end to the risk of an anti-national manifestation by its ruling satrap.

New demands are being made on the government in the economic sphere. China had previously been fortunate in avoiding the steeply rising prices, shortage of commodities, and serious social dislocations that accompany all wars. Now all three have caught up with it, and the white-collar and petty-official classes that have been worst hit by the increase in the cost of living are putting up a vociferous cry for strict measures of control. Some effort, still too cautious, is being made to check profiteering, which is so obviously responsible for the high prices of many necessities that a mere admonition from the Generalissimo, unaccompanied by any threat of serious specific penalties, was enough to scare large quantities of hoarded Szechuan rice back on to a supposedly short market, bringing quotations down with a thump. Such warnings, however, are effective only with the small fish in the pool. The bigger sharks cannot be forced to disgorge without much sterner action. This problem is serious and can only be solved if the government forgets certain of its apprehensions and launches a bold attack on the activities of a number of retired militarists and merchant princes whose political support, or at least good behavior, is assured while they are feeding at the trough but would be doubtful if they were thwarted.

Another major problem so far unsolved is the smuggling that goes on along seacoast, river bank, and battle front. Infiltration of Japanese goods can be stopped only by the development of industries capable of supplying all essential consumption goods—first of all, textiles. Something has been done along this line in the deep rear, but in more vulnerable areas the lead given by the Chinese Industrial Cooperatives has not been followed with sufficient energy. More serious is the problem of outward smuggling, of the tremendous leakage of important materials, notably tungsten and gold. Revenue agents alone cannot check such smuggling, but the mass vigilance of the people of the region almost certainly could. Unfortunately, the atmosphere of the affected provinces seems to preclude such a solution. The other alternative is for the national monopolies drastically to jack up the low official prices at present paid to producers, to face the fact that they are operating on a virtually open market, and simply to outbid the Japanese.

Luckily, the basic economic mainstays of China's resistance continue to stand firm. The war's third good rice crop has created an estimated two and a half years' reserve for the army and the people. The decreased purchasing power of the dollar has been compensated by increased circulation of currency among the population, but this risky course has not caused any malignant inflationary symptoms; and increased foreign loans, coupled with the government's intense effort to bring the floating shoals of notes back into the state coffers through a national savings system, should prevent their appearance in the future. A Central Planning Board and numerous

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other regulatory organs have recently been created by the Supreme National Defense Council to study and steady the economic trends now at work in the land.

The international, military, and economic aspects of China's situation, of which I have merely sketched the main features, are naturally bound up with its internal political problems. Here, the most important fact remains the tug of war between the waverers and the consistent advocates of resistance. Specific problems, such as the relations of the government in its West China haven with the remaining war lords, who still have such a capacity for mischief, the continued collaboration between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party, and the introduction of constitutional governments, all fall into their places in relation to the paramount tasks of the war. Thus, the two majority groups in the government continue to view the problem of the anti-Japanese united front from the standpoint, not of the anti-communism which is common to them both, but of their varying attitudes on the general strategy and aims of national resistance. The axiom that a split today would inevitably mean surrender to Japan is still undisputed, and the hidden defeatists and open compromisers have taken a bad beating from recent international changes. On the other hand, the trend toward political democracy that manifested itself so hopefully at the beginning of the war has made little or no progress during the past year and a half, and China's war effort has thus been deprived of a great potential source of energy. Despite preparations and much advance publicity, the National People's Congress, scheduled for November, has once again been postponed. In its stead, the government has decreed a certain widening of the People's Political Council, a body with only consultative powers which the new legislature was to supersede entirely. It is clear that the internal situation is being deliberately frozen at its present level, at least until Japan's intentions become clear—a new offensive in China or a period of "peaceful" coexistence for the free and the occupied territories—or until the international skies yield some new and decisive portent.

It may be seen from this summary that the characteristics of a stalemate are in the foreground of the Chinese scene today, with every tendency working itself out slowly and unspectacularly in a hundred scattered trials of strength with other currents. Meanwhile, the spirit and determination of the people continue to be basic, exciting, and inspiring. Traveling slowly through the whole breadth of the country after an absence of almost two years, I felt, like a physical presence, the pride of every man and woman in the contrast between China's resistance and the collapse of France; everywhere I sensed the bracing consciousness that China, which has borne the brunt of imperialist attack for three years, is able to face its difficulties as a free nation when richer and stronger lands have fallen deeply into slavery.

Everybody's Business

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

Railroad Signals at Danger!

IN THE current discussion of defense bottlenecks chief emphasis has been given to possible shortages of steel, non-ferrous metals, machine tools, and skilled labor. Little attention has been paid to a possible deficiency in transport, perhaps because, while it is fairly simple to estimate the volume of steel required to fill known contracts, it is not so easy to translate these same contracts into terms of ton-miles of freight. It is even harder to calculate the indirect effects of the defense program on transport requirements, but we know that rising employment in the arms industries is proving a strong stimulus to business generally, and we know, too, that the trend of car loadings is closely linked to the general level of economic activity. Looking ahead, therefore, it seems advisable to inquire whether a big increase in transport demand is going to be met without strain.

Last summer, soon after the National Defense Advisory Commission was set up, a plan was put before it for a large-scale equipment-buying program to be undertaken by the railroads jointly. The program, which was drafted by R. N. Janeway, economist to the Chrysler Corporation, called for the construction of 500,000 freight cars and 2,000 locomotives. This equipment, it was suggested, would be needed by the time the rearmament program reached its peak; an immediate start on its provision was desirable because the materials and labor required might not be available later.

These recommendations were quickly drowned under a deluge of cold water from the railroad industry. Ralph Budd, defense commissioner in charge of transportation and president of the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad, was reported by the *Wall Street Journal* as expressing the view that there was nothing to get excited about since there was all the transportation presently needed and more. He questioned the theory that there is a close correlation between the Federal Reserve index of production and car loadings and suggested that, inasmuch as general analyses were unreliable, each road should estimate and provide for its own needs.

In the months since, a good many railroads have placed sizable contracts for freight cars and locomotives, but in the first nine months of this year orders for the former aggregated only 33,486 units compared with 33,623 in the corresponding period of 1939. Moreover, these orders do not mean a net addition to the number of cars available for service, since they are more than offset by the number of cars retired because of old age. In 1939 alone such retirements totaled more than 81,000, and while the figure for 1940 may be rather less, the fact that about a quarter of the freight cars owned by Class I railroads are over twenty-five years old means a steady procession to the scrap heap.

In October the Association of American Railroads, whose president, J. J. Pelley, had declared in June that "the railroads will be able to meet any transportation demand that may arise from the preparedness program," evidently became alarmed. After a new survey of traffic needs, it recommended

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the purchase of 100,000 freight cars during the next twelve months and appealed to members to cooperate in expediting freight movements. As early as September the association was attempting to make special arrangements to meet a "technical" shortage of long gondola cars needed to move heavy steel items. On November 10 members were asked to prevent a shortage of equipment by utilizing with the "utmost efficiency" the special-type cars used for the movement of trucks and automobiles. Two weeks later a tight situation in box cars was reported at many points in the West and Southwest, and other roads were urged to speed up the return of such units to their owners.

The increasingly urgent tone of the communiqués from the A. A. R. is good evidence of the weak foundations of Mr. Budd's summer optimism. Despite his reputation as an unusually alert railroad executive, the transport member of the Defense Commission appears to share that lack of imaginative foresight which has long been the curse of his industry. In the twenties the railroads played the merger game, piled up fixed charges, watered their stock, and generally behaved as if they expected prosperity to go on forever. In the depression years, with a few shining exceptions, they did little to meet new conditions and new competition, but instead let their properties run to seed while they waited for a break. And now that they have a golden opportunity they are not prepared to make the most of it, and both their stockholders and the public are likely to suffer. Are these harsh words? Let me call as witness Robert Laffan, *Wall Street Journal* columnist, who wrote on October 5, 1940:

> Complaints on the part of some railroads that they may have to purchase their rolling stock and equipment at a time when labor and material costs are high merely reveal once again that the carriers have exercised little foresight in preparing their equipment for a larger measure of business activity. Some railroad officials may say that they cannot afford to buy equipment until they are in actual need of it, but that reasoning is somewhat unconvincing in view of the liberal financing terms that both the RFC and the equipment builders themselves have been offering in recent years.
>
> The fact remains that few railroads could be induced to buy equipment during recent years when most of the equipment-manufacturing capacity was lying idle. They have always rushed into the market at the last moment, and numerous roads have neglected for years to spend even the depreciation they set aside for reconditioning their equipment.

No form of bottleneck can do more to slow up the defense program than railroad congestion. But that is something we are likely to experience six or twelve months hence unless drastic action is taken quickly. The railroad-equipment manufacturers are getting loaded up with munitions orders, and if later on they are suddenly swamped with demands for freight cars they will not be able to give early deliveries. The transport division of the Defense Commission ought to decide now what types of cars will be wanted and in what numbers, and instead of allowing each road to dribble out its own orders, should insist that the railroads as a group place bulk contracts. This would encourage manufacturing efficiency and do much to speed up production. The railroad signals are set at "Danger." Will the Defense Commission take heed or must we wait for action until demand crashes supply and the tracks are blocked?

In the Wind

MERWIN K. HART and Charles A. Lindbergh are still getting together at regular intervals, with a representative of Herbert Hoover sitting in. The same group has been flirting with Vichy emissaries here.

MR. HOOVER is said to have protested to the Gallup Institute over its phrasing of the question about sending food to Europe. The bulk of the persons interviewed said no to the straight question. Mr. Hoover wants a new poll on a question containing a dozen qualifications, such as the assurance that the Nazis won't get the food.

THE ROAD from Mexico City to Scapulco is marked by many signs reading *Conserve la Derecha* (Keep to the Right). Under one, a traveler reports, someone had added the words, *Con Almazán.*

DURING THE Vultee aircraft strike newspapers, radio, and wire services reported at length that a non-striker, driving a company car, was beaten up by strikers. Several days later it was reported—briefly—that he had been sneaking to a football game on company time, was beaten up in a fight there, and made up the first tale to explain it all.

ERNEST T. WEIR is said to have told isolationists that he is ready to put up a lot of cash to help bar credits to Britain. . . . Newspapermen insist that Joe Kennedy heard his "democracy-is-dead-in-Britain" interview read to him over the telephone before it was published, and that he repudiated it only when the storm got too fierce.

AFTER BANNING it for six years, Chicago will finally let the movie "Scarface," based on Al Capone's career, be shown in the city. . . . Nazis in Mexico are using paid advertisements to discredit anti-Nazi films.

NEWSPAPERS HAVE carried reports that the Greek Communist Party is supporting the war against Italy. The *Daily Worker* insists that leaflets quoted to that effect are "British forgeries"; the Greek party's position, it says, is in fact that the Metaxas government became responsible for the Italian invasion by abandoning its neutral position in favor of Britain.

IT WASN'T mentioned in the dispatches, but reporters say that news of the assault on David Dubinsky at the A. F. of L. convention caused wild hilarity among Lewis men at the C. I. O. convention.

CANDOR NOTE: A dispatch published in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* from its Rome correspondent after the raid on Taranto reported that "the true happenings at Taranto are sad enough. Some devil-may-care foolhardy British pilots succeeded in firing torpedoes at Italian warships and damage was done to the Italian fleet. The strength of the Italian fleet has certainly not been increased by this."

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*]

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A Native at Large

BY JONATHAN DANIELS

An Open Letter to Mr. Ickes

Dear Sir: You will pardon me, I hope, Mr. Secretary, if as one of the representatives of "the less than 23 per cent of our press" which supported the President I respond to your request for comment on "how the recent election established the popular confidence in the press that brings it the strength without which it cannot be free." My comment is on the note of satisfaction I seemed to detect in yours. If we are moving in the direction of loss of freedom through loss of confidence, it seems to me that we should both be not satisfied but alarmed.

You may not agree, but I think newspapermen are as aware of the faults in the press as Cabinet members are. It is certainly no secret that there has seemed to be a loss of contact between editorial pages and the earth and the people, that newspaper owners seem often to have clotted as a propertied class, that there has been a good deal of rather unpleasant pompousness of possession among some publishers about this freedom of the press. Some of them have talked as if they were preferred stockholders in the Bill of Rights.

Also I share your feeling that the 77 per cent of the press which opposed Roosevelt was out of step in the country's march. But both you and I have seen the press defeated in better causes, time after time. Bad as the newspapers are, it is remarkable in how many good causes they lose in local elections every year, in local fights against corruption and crookedness and the pushing around of little fellows by tough ones. Furthermore, not all the people-moving personalities who beat newspapers in elections in America are, in my opinion, as excellent in virtue and in the use of power as President Roosevelt.

There used to be, Mr. Secretary, a cynical rule among newspapermen: never win a local election. There is still some sense in the rule. Winning can be bad business and not merely for the business office. A newspaper devoted to the support of city hall might not be quite so vigilant about what goes on in city hall. There is some sense in the rule even as it rises above the city halls.

Furthermore, this "power of the press" business is not as simple as carrying one election—or three of them. It is not at all certain who exercises it. You are aware of remote ownerships and controls. Give all discredit to reactionary publishers. Contemplate the pressure of advertisers. A great danger still may come from the demand of the people to get the news they want to get. Far more disastrous than the showing in the recent election, I think, was the general impression given by our whole press in the past that Nazi Germany could not really fight a war. Publishers are wicked and wrong-headed often. But reporters soon learn what stories will get a play. When stories get a play, the reporter gets a promotion. Sometimes such stories support the office-understood prejudices of the publisher. Sometimes also they support the wishful-reading of the subscribers. The press may be most dangerous when it responds to the wish of the readers to tell them what they want to hear.

Has the press lost its power? Sometimes the very danger of the press seems to me to lie in the dimensions to which its power has grown. You are not a man to be fighting a last-coughing corpse. No one in America has recognized that power more clearly than the officials of the New Deal, who have, properly I think, expanded the government's information services beyond anything ever known before. I was outvoted among the editors in the election. Seventy-seven per cent of them may have been wrong in opposing the President. But, God bless us, Mr. Ickes, we can be grateful for the fact that 100 per cent were not with him—in new patterns of unanimity on this earth.

Obviously, as you point out, we have nothing to fear from the press if the people disregard it. But never before in the history of the world has power been so preoccupied with the press. In a new age it may seem to be losing its old prestige and influence. I don't think so. Neither do Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, and the rest. And personally I would rather take my chances on the American press, even with the possibilities of Roy Howard being crazy in ownership and Colonel McCormick being wicked in possession, than on any other press in the world. I wish the press came nearer to perfection. I wish Mr. Howard and Colonel McCormick and all the littler publishers and editors (including me) and reporters behind them were wiser. It still is, I think, the first force for freedom in America.

Pray for the press, Mr. Ickes. It needs it. I can understand your feeling that sometimes it needs a spanking too. But pray. It isn't all we want, but it is all we've got between us and darkness in this world.

Yours respectfully,

JONATHAN DANIELS

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BOOKS and the ARTS

Autumn 1940

BY W. H. AUDEN

Returning each morning from a timeless world
The senses open upon a world of time;
    After so many years the light is
    Novel still and immensely ambitious.

But translated from her own informal world
The ego is bewildered and does not want
    A shining novelty this morning,
    And does not like the noise or the people.

For behind the doors of this ambitious day
Stand shadows with enormous grudges, outside
    Its chartered ocean of perception
    Misshapen coastguards drunk with foreboding,

And whispering websters stealing through this world
Discredit so much literature and praise:
    Summer was worse than we expected,
    And now cold autumn comes on the water.

The lesser lives retire on their savings, their
Small deposits of starches and nuts, and soon
    Will be asleep or traveling or
    Dead; but this year the towns of our childhood

Are changing complexion along with the woods,
And many who have shared our conduct will add
    Their pinches or detritus to the
    Nutritive chain of determined being,

And even the uneliminated decline
To a vita minima, huddling for warmth
    The hard- and the soft-mouthed together
    In a coma of waiting, just breathing

In a darkness of tribulation and death,
While blizzards havoc the gardens, and the old
    Folly becomes unsafe, the mill-wheels
    Rust and the weirs fall slowly to pieces.

Will the inflamed ego attempt as before
To migrate again to her family place,
    To the hanging gardens of Eros
    And the moons of his magical summer?

But the local train does not run any more,
The heretical roses have lost their scent,
    And her Cornish Hollow of tryst is
    Swarming now with discourteous villains

Whom father's battered hat cannot wish away,
And the fancy-governed sequence leads us all
    Back to that labyrinth where either
    We are found or lose ourselves for ever.

Oh what sign can we make to be found? How can
We will the knowledge that we must know to will?
    The waste is a suburb of prophets,
    But few have seen Jesus and so many

Judas the Abyss. The rocks are big and bad,
And death so substantial in the thinning air;
    Learning screams in the narrow gate where
    Events are traded with time, but who can

Tell what logic must and must not leave to fate,
Or what laws we are permitted to obey?
    There are no birds; the predatory
    Glaciers glitter in the chilly evening;

And death is probable. Nevertheless,
Whatever the situation and the blame,
    Let the lips do formal contrition
    For whatever is going to happen;

Time remembered bear witness to time required,
The positive and negative ways through time
    Embrace and encourage each other
    In a brief moment of intersection;

That the orgulous spirit may while it can
Conform to its temporal focus with praise,
    Acknowledging the attributes of
    One immortal one infinite Substance,

And the shabby structure of indolent flesh
Give a resonant echo to the Word which was
    From the beginning, and the shining
    Light be comprehended by the darkness.

Shafts of Speech

MAKE BRIGHT THE ARROWS. By Edna St. Vincent Millay. Harper and Brothers. $1.75.

IN THE field which she first chose for herself Edna St. Vincent Millay was excellent. And her excellence was almost always in exact proportion to the closeness with which she worked to the classical tradition. That tradition had come to her affected by the practice of poets in English for over three centuries; she was not unaware of it at the source. Of the Latin lyric poets, she had the clarity and the grace; she used only such words as anybody might use, but with a personal precision, so that even her slightest poems have often an epigrammatic charm. The one conspicuous artifice in her writing was the verse itself.

I do not know how consciously this was done. But I do

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remember that at the time she was coming into her own Catullus was all the cry. Certainly the speech she sought was as direct and fervent as his. Miss Millay's poetry had a romantic import, and through much of it there runs a conflict with whatever was unjust and outworn in the social conventions of the time. She does not write as a romantic, and as a poet she is at her best when most conventional. Many of her images seem to come to her from other poets; actually she has taken them out of the public domain and by long familiarity made them her own. A comparison with Catullus can only be carried so far. Catullus is a poet of the first order, and in place of his male imagination there is, in Miss Millay's poetry, not an imagination, but a feminine sensibility. Her amatory poems share certain qualities with those of Catullus, of which the first, I should say, is an outrageous honesty. But they sound much more as though they had come from one of Catullus's naughty girls. She has used Lesbia's name as though it were her own. And she is like the Latin poets in this, that in accounting for the conduct of lovers she can turn, in little more than a line, from a light disparagement of love to a sudden, grave, and deferential praise. Her levity has often been imitated; what none of her imitators knew was her sense of the austereness of passion.

> illa atque alia viderunt luce marinas
> mortales oculis nudato corpore Nymphas
> nutricum tenus extantis e gurgite cano.

Her nymphs rise from colder seas than any Catullus disclosed to mortal eyes and scatter when they are seen, half submerged and half in light, cold spray from the coasts of Maine.

Miss Millay was at her best in her love poems. In "Make Bright the Arrows" she is writing what—since war is an extension of politics—can be called political poems. In them she is not at her best. She has often written beautifully, but she was never very sure of her style. Though in the present volume there are lines that recall the old grace and precision, the recollection is dim. And, for the most part, the book simply is not "written" at all. For what is there to say of lines like these:

> Not France, not England's what's involved,
> Not we—there's something to be solved
> Of grave concern to free men all:
> Can Freedom stand? Must Freedom fall?

This sort of thing might get by at a public meeting. But on the printed page it simply will not stand.

One of the difficulties of making poetry out of politics is that whatever concerns politics is bound to be a matter of controversy, while no poetic statement that can be controverted is worth anything. The conviction that lies behind it may be one which we should like to see overthrown, but the poetic statement must be one which, despite our opinions, we cannot but accept. I can accept most of the convictions that lie behind what her publishers call Miss Millay's "Notebooks of 1940," for they are already my own. I can accept her dismay at the fall of Belgium, Holland, and France, for that I shared. But I cannot accept her poetic statement either of her convictions or of her dismay. For that would be to accept a counterfeit coin merely because it has a proper head of liberty stamped on it. The weight still is not there.

Poetry such as Miss Millay has written owes little to imaginative insight; it depends therefore on a minute accuracy in the statement of emotion. That we have the right to demand of her. In urging us to make bright the arrows, she has weapons in mind. It is only the martial arrows she has sharpened here. The arrows of Apollo lie neglected, tarnished, blunt.

JOHN PEALE BISHOP

A Letter from Jallez to Jerphanion*

I'LL send you the book.† You won't have to worry, *mon vieux,* about the censor's letting it pass, since there is not a thing in it to which he could take exception. If you were still in Paris, the book might risk falling into the hands of Otto Abetz, the High Commissar for occupied France. He would chuckle over it royally and you'd never get it, for he is one of M. Romains's new protagonists!

No, calm yourself at once. The "Seven Mysteries of Europe" remain mysteries after a reading of this volume. To them, in fact, is added an eighth: how could we, who grew up with Romains and have never lost contact with him, have been ignorant all this time of what a great man he has become? A vigorous novelist, *tant que vous voudrez,* international president of the P. E. N. Clubs, and all that that implies. I am even willing to take on good faith his spurning of the Academy—though, on the side, I'd be grateful to you for verifying certain current rumors of at least a temporary weakening on that score. I'll accept Romains's statements that all the French generals had read his "Verdun" and found it good and that almost all the statesmen of Europe had read his "Men of Good Will"—that ought to set *us* both on a pedestal, too. But I, for one, never suspected what great political power he wielded. Did you know that it was he who put Delbos into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1936, who—by a radio speech in November, 1938—kept Daladier's ministry from being overthrown and the general strike of November 30 from being a success? Talk of two birds with one stone! But there's something better yet. Maybe L. T. was right when he used to claim that Romains was a dangerous man because his Unanimism foreshadowed fascism. You may remember Romains's "July 9 Plan"? I never read the pamphlet, but I recall Jean Thomas's interest in it. Well, it appears that the Nazis knew it well and received him so pompously in Berlin in 1934 because they thought he was going to become the French dictator. Where were *we,* Jerph, where *were* we?

I'll tell you how it happened. Just after the first armistice, when you were trying to settle back into civil life and forget the horrors of Verdun and I was writing you from Nice about my idyl with Antonia, Jules Romains vowed that he would prevent the next world war. In more recent years, finding himself occupying "an absolutely unique position in

* The two young intellectuals who figure prominently in "Men of Good Will" by Jules Romains. In portraying them Romains drew largely upon his own youth.

† "Seven Mysteries of Europe." By Jules Romains. Translated by Germaine Bree. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

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Europe, and even in the world," and profoundly dissatisfied with what the professional politicians and diplomats were doing, he undertook by himself direct "personal action on vital points." The description he gives of the Belgian Henri de Man fits Romains admirably in this most recent avatar: "He had a certain mistrust of democratic methods, a belief in action, personal, direct, and even secret, and a taste for authority." Meanwhile, other such free lances in other capitals were beginning to undertake the same defense of peace. Together they formed a kind of mysterious, unregimented "order of chivalry." Here is an example of how they worked. Henri de Man came to Paris with a secret message from King Leopold to Daladier in 1938, his idea being to act directly on Daladier, Chamberlain, Hitler, and Mussolini without the intermediary of the chancelleries. Naturally he went first to Romains, who welcomed the plan enthusiastically and took him direct to—Bonnet, then Foreign Minister. A year later, with the war already on, Romains goes to Belgium to see the king and no one but the king. Henri de Man will surely arrange the interview, but, alas, he sends Romains to Foreign Minister Spaak, and Leopold never comes into the picture. The members of this chivalric order Romains calls Men of Good-Will; some of them are Henri de Man, who became head of the Belgian government of capitulation, Otto Abetz, now military governor of a conquered Paris, and von Ribbentrop. Isn't this a libel against us, the original men of good-will? Shall we resign together?

In dealing with such men Romains seems to have been the dupe, but don't judge him until you get to the eloquent apology for well-wishing dupes in the last chapter. By his own testimony he seems also to have been generally unsuccessful in his "quite unofficial missions," when he set out to patch up some situation or other. Besides the two Belgian failures, it is noteworthy that his report to Gamelin on the Maginot Line was ignored, that his plan for the Saar plebiscite—inspired by Ribbentrop, Rosenberg, and Goebbels—was shelved by the French government, and that when he got a promise from Spaak he could not move Daladier. All is summed up in the incident of February 6, 1934. At the height of the riots he sent Daladier a card urging him to hold on firmly; within a few hours Daladier resigned. But what if Romains was right each time? It is impossible to believe today that the Saar plebiscite would have resulted differently or that de Man's scheme for wringing the hearts of Hitler and Mussolini would have availed anything or that the letter Romains wanted Daladier to write to Leopold would have saved Giraud's army and obviated the necessity of Dunkirk.

No, our friend has not even approached a solution of the European mysteries, and I can't help wondering how deeply he even penetrated them. He never met Hitler or Mussolini, and the only English statesman he quotes directly is Harold Nicolson. He appears never to have had contact with the southern end of the Axis, and his German relations were limited to the years 1934-35, plus two formal dinners in Paris in 1938. He confesses his English chapter to be "drab and blurred" because England is that way, just generally anonymous.

I hate to think what this book may do, Jerph, to Romains's reputation as a writer—and hence, incidentally, to ours as fictional characters. Yet, let's not be unfair: in this book Romains is still the novelist. Reading it rapidly, one can't but be intrigued by the atmosphere of underground secrecy, the mystery men shuttling across the Continent, the constant evasion of possible spies. In fact, there are direct comparisons here with the fictional work: Abetz's use of Romains reminds me of M. Karl and Laulerque; the unofficial missions correspond on a larger scale to Quinette's spying on secret societies; one of the Daladier interviews Romains himself likens to that between Maykosen and the Kaiser. Reading the book more attentively, one notices the creative writer's technique—imaginary conversations when real ones are lacking, the fact that the most important things "said" by Romains's interlocutors are most often his interpretation of a glance or a gesture. And then just think of how much he has made here of how little! The novelist appears on almost every page, and I prefer to see this book as a confession of how Jules Romains has attempted to live some of the episodes in his novels. Let's put it, then, on the shelf reserved for documents contributing to the literary history of our time. And as fictional characters shan't we climb down right away?

JUSTIN O'BRIEN

Audubon

AUDUBON'S AMERICA. Edited by Donald Culross Peattie. Houghton Mifflin and Company. $6.

IN THIS volume selections have been drawn from Audubon's existing journals and from the "Ornithological Biography" to form an outline of Audubon's life in terms of what he saw as he looked out upon the varied America of his many travels. Interspersed through the book are some seventeen plates in color, handsomely reproduced, including plates from the "Quadrupeds," which are less frequently seen than the originals or reproductions of the "Birds" and therefore are of considerable interest, even though they do not constitute Audubon's most characteristic work. The selections from the "Birds" tend toward the highly dramatic and probably were chosen for their illustrative value in relation to the text. The somber little self-portrait, so delicately yet realistically painted, is a welcome addition, as is the landscape view of Natchez by Audubon. The prize, for this reader, is a small unfinished drawing, reproduced here in its exact original dimensions, of a hen turkey and her chicks, which shows the minute, exquisite touch and the fluent instinct for design which were among Audubon's primary gifts.

Design appeared in almost everything he created, in an astonishing variety and often with great complexity. Even his early sketches contain this factor; a little study of Kentucky cardinals, drawn in 1811, was thrown into a bold wreath-like pattern with branches and leaves. Design might be said to form a signature for Audubon's work. This fact offers, I think, the soundest refutation to a charge which Mr. Peattie has repeated, drawing from a recent biography by Stanley Arthur, that a lad named Joseph Mason, who accompanied Audubon as a pupil on the memorable journey to New Orleans in 1821, painted the flower settings for a large number of the ornithological studies—for many of the

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warblers, the white-throated finch, the swamp sparrow, the yellow-billed cuckoo, the Baltimore oriole, the mourning dove, and many others that are among the richest, the most complex paintings of the whole series, some hundred or more. Mr. Peattie says further that Audubon learned what he knew about botany and botanical painting from Mason, and in his later work only followed "mannerisms" which Mason had taught him.

Joseph Mason was a lad of thirteen when he made the journey to New Orleans. He remained with Audubon for a year and nine months. To have produced the paintings thus accredited to him Mason would have been obliged to create one every five days on an average, within that time finding the flowers, sometimes in remote places, and choosing them for their habitat relationship to the birds, some of which were unknown at the time to Audubon himself. He would have been obliged to start this enterprise, at the age of thirteen, with the complete mastery of a special technique. If Mason in later years had continued such work with the brilliance manifest in the flower paintings of the "Birds" he would have carved for himself a particular niche in American natural history, but there is no evidence that he did so, though he was employed for a time as a museum flower painter in Philadelphia and lived to a considerable age. The sole basis for this charge is an article by Joseph Neal printed in the *New England Galaxy* in 1835, when Audubon had become famous. A more unreliable witness than Neal could hardly be found. Wilful, flighty, a hasty writer, he was continually in hot water because of his habit of casting aspersions upon his contemporaries. He knew nothing of the original circumstances; he said he had the facts from Mason. Neither Mr. Peattie nor Mr. Arthur offers documentation or proof beyond Neal's article.

Some years ago with this charge in mind I examined more than four hundred of the originals of the "Birds," and I was unable to discover the slightest indication that any of the paintings represented the work of two different artists: the handling is singularly of a piece. That from an early date Audubon was concerned with habitat backgrounds is proved by many sketches: in the little wreath-like study of the Kentucky cardinals he gave even more attention to the form and texture of leaves and bark than to the plumage of the birds. But the final answer to this charge lies in the consistent factor of design inhering in all of Audubon's work with the exception of certain late paintings for which the Swiss artist Lehman provided scenic backgrounds, probably because Audubon thought that the large series needed variety or because he was pressed for time: in these paintings—Mr. Peattie has included one of them—the element of design is noticeably absent. It would have been impossible for one artist to create a complex design with flowers and for another to superimpose upon it another complex design of birds, and keep the relationships in line and color fluently established. In some instances a rich design is even more apparent in the original drawings than in the plates, where occasionally a completing leaf or spray was cut off to fit the paper. The whole charge as to Mason's work is an empty one, and I am sorry that Mr. Peattie has so uncritically given it currency.

Mr. Peattie's heated references to the lost dauphin are puzzling: he thrusts them into the opening paragraphs of his biographical notes with the statement that only recently has "the preposterous claim" been made, by "two women biographers." Obviously one of them is Alice Jaynes Tyler, a member of the Audubon family, who I am sure would not call her little book "I Who Should Command All" a biography: in it she has assembled some of the curiously large number of coincidences that have raised the question whether Audubon was the lost dauphin. Mrs. Tyler's book alone might have shown Mr. Peattie that this query is by no means recent. It has a long history. Speculation in regard to it has been common for years in parts of Kentucky and Louisiana where the Audubons lived. Lucy Audubon implicitly believed that her husband was the lost heir of Louis XVI, as did her two daughters, Harriet and Maria. Members of the Bakewell and Audubon families of the present day give full credence to it. The final fact is that Audubon himself apparently believed it, whether at first with his broad touch of humor or with his equally broad sense of romance. He certainly referred to it. The evidence on this point is clear.

The fact that this theory as to Audubon's birth is an integral part of the Audubon story was of course the reason for a few brief allusions to it in a work by the other woman biographer. I feel bound to add that Mr. Peattie's statement that the theory is advanced as a "claim" in my book is not true. It seems to me that Mr. Peattie is rather free with his charges. In my own case this is not important, but I think he robs Audubon of an engaging twist of imaginative energy when he so hotly dismisses the story without the slightest indication that Audubon himself believed it. It is really interesting that one so richly gifted, so buoyant, so unswerving of purpose could carry the load of this idea. It certainly suggests the complexity of his character on even an added scale. To have carelessly argued that the magnificent achievement of the flower paintings did not belong to Audubon is to leave him, in this volume, shorn indeed.

CONSTANCE ROURKE

The Crisis of the West

NOT BY ARMS ALONE. By Hans Kohn. Harvard University Press. $1.75.

THE unity of this volume of occasional essays is achieved by the fact that the essays all revolve about the crisis of our Western civilization before the threat of totalitarianism. Some of the essays trace the historical roots of the present situation. Others vigorously express the author's conviction that the democratic world has been tardy in recognizing the nihilist character of totalitarian politics. Others, again, deal with the unsolved problem of the unity of Europe, for which the Nazi attempt at tyrannical unification is a false solution.

While all the essays are rewarding, the ones which deal with the historical background of the present situation are particularly valuable. The first, on Totalitarian Philosophy, reduces to its component parts the fascist glorification of war as the ultimate norm of existence. With careful discrimination it shows to what degree Nazism is historically related to Prussianism and how far it goes beyond Prussianism in glorifying war. "As is well known," writes Professor Kohn,

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"Frederick II stated that under Frederick I Berlin had been the Athens of the North (an opinion greatly overstating the case) and that under Frederick William I it became Sparta (an opinion this time much nearer the fact). . . . But though Prussia foreshadowed the totalitarian philosophy of war, its application was limited by the acceptance of the moral standards of Christianity and of common Western civilization."

In a chapter on Austria-Hungary Dr. Kohn portrays the realm of the Hapsburgs as the meeting ground of narrowly Germanic and more cosmopolitan conceptions of empire, the latter of course being echoes and vestigial remains of the Holy Roman imperial tradition. His analysis clarifies the politics of Dollfuss and Schuschnigg and explains why those statesmen thought it possible to use the Catholic tradition as a counterweight against Germanic imperialism and why such efforts could not avail. The debasement of Vienna, once the proud capital of the empire of the east, to a German provincial city is given an added pathos by these historical perspectives.

The study of Czechoslovakia is particularly illuminating because it throws light not only upon Czech history but upon the way history is made. It explains how modern Czech nationalism was indissolubly united to the democratic idea because the Czech historian, Palacky, the mentor of Masaryk and the spiritual father of modern Czech nationalism, reinterpreted the position of John Huss so that he ceased to be a heretic and became the symbol of both the democratic revolt against medievalism and Czech national sentiment.

Professor Kohn's analysis of the failure of democratic peoples to assess the peril of totalitarianism seriously enough, "their complete lack of comprehension of the new dynamic and world-revolutionary forces of National Socialism," is convincing enough but actually not as thoroughgoing as other similar studies which have come from his own pen. All classes, he declares, have shared in the policy of appeasement. The ideas underlying fascism "seemed so fantastic that they refused to believe them." "This illusory optimism was at the root of the disaster which befell democratic nations." In explaining the difference between fascist brutality and the failure of democratic nations to achieve justice he declares that "Englishmen and Americans are brutal because they fail to live up to their philosophy of life; fascists are brutal because their philosophy glorifies hard ruthlessness and domination by force." Both explanations are plausible enough as far as they go. Taken together, they would seem to suggest that the democratic world was too true to its ideals —though of course not completely loyal to them—to understand people who outrage every concept of justice. Does not such an explanation give too much credit to the liberal credos of the democratic world, and does it not fail to assess the real depths of the spiritual weakness behind policies of appeasement? Good people have difficulty in understanding bad people not because they are too virtuous to understand malignant evil but because they are too hypocritical to understand the evil within themselves, which is different in degree rather than in kind from the evil of really "bad" people. This is to say that the democratic world does not understand the negation of justice in Nazi philosophy because it does not understand the precarious and tentative character of all achievements of justice in its own world.

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Only in terms of such realism is it possible to assess, among other things, the tendency toward appeasement among the privileged classes of the democracies. It is perfectly sound to absolve Mr. Chamberlain of personal turpitude as Mr. Kohn does. But if the class motives behind his policies are analyzed, one gets a rather sad picture of the degree to which economic interest may prompt treason to a civilization. And an analysis of Communist politics will force the conclusion that other than purely economic motives may prompt men to treason against a civilization.

The will to fight the Nazis must come from an understanding of how precious may be the difference between a little justice and no justice at all. But the ability to fight them, including proper precautions against treason in our own ranks, must come from understanding the similarities between the Nazis and us. REINHOLD NIEBUHR

From Dowson to Auden

POETRY AND THE MODERN WORLD. By David Daiches. The University of Chicago Press. $2.50.

MR. DAICHES has written one of the few tough-minded studies of twentieth-century English poetry. Others have turned it over more sensitively on their tongues, or approached it with more zest and spirit. Scarcely anyone, in fact, has dealt with it more soberly than Mr. Daiches, but then, scarcely anyone has tried harder to explain its impulses, plumb its morality, and chart its direction. Mr. Daiches has not been interested in providing the poetic equivalent of a wine-tasting: what he makes clear is not so much the quality of the poetry as the nature.

His book, as a result, is not so much criticism as analysis, and at times not so much analysis as exposition. In method it can roughly be compared with such a work as "Axel's Castle," though it is certainly never like it in tone. For where, with Wilson, exposition often takes the form of an expert narrative, and analysis is coupled with any amount of aesthetic insight, Mr. Daiches's treatment is faintly pedagogic, his style flinty, his progress careful. But there is nothing academic about his thinking, or insipid about his opinions.

Mr. Daiches begins by picking over the bones of the Victorians, poets who in one way or another affirmed the life about them. He concludes with Day Lewis, Auden, and Spender, poets who rejected the life about them but affirmed the future. All the poets in between rejected the affirmations of the first group without being able to achieve the affirmations of the second. From the Dowsons of the '90's to the Eliots of the '20's there was a constant search for new patterns, new myths, new values, all of which either led nowhere at all or in the wrong direction. The Yellow Nineties group shook off Victorianism by shaking off life itself. Nonconformist pessimists like Hardy and Housman rejected the Victorian spirit but could find nothing else to take its place. The Georgians were content to narrow the old perspective—not so much through mistaking the part for the whole as through deliberately substituting it. Finding the whole of life too vast and too perplexing, they adopted their own little corners of England and pastoralized them. The Imagists "escaped altogether from the world of values . . . by concentrating entirely on technique." The war poets might have returned to a world of values, but the best of them, like Wilfred Owen, were killed.

Retrenchment and escapism thus persisted straight through to Eliot. And though Eliot's was the greatest retrenchment of all, it was so great as to become revolutionary. He threw over a whole tradition in favor of one that had preceded it centuries before, never realizing that it had been abandoned for the same reason that Eliot was abandoning its successor: because it had reached a blind alley. But Eliot, of course, brought valuable things to English poetry. He had a brilliant grasp of his medium. He "gave imagism a dialectic." He endowed verse with qualities that made use of the mind as well as the ear. These had their importance, even though Eliot's intoxication with the past eventually mired him in it; and in an age of flaccid morals, Eliot's positive morality had its importance too. As Mr. Daiches says of Eliot (it might equally be Eliot speaking of Baudelaire): "He believed that it is better to go to Hell than to Limbo, to be positively evil than neither good nor evil."

Mr. Daiches's elaborate study of Yeats, most of it a painstaking attempt to chart all the stages of Yeats's myth-making and system-seeking, is rather more instructive than it is interesting. Perhaps I have always taken a lazy man's way with Yeats, finding him very often a magnificent poet but very seldom a rewarding thinker or theorist. But his constant shopping around for inspiration, particularly in view of what curious shops he visited, has always seemed less important than the fact that Yeats, in the end, invariably came back to himself.

It has been only the Auden group who have squarely faced the modern world, unbeguiled, as Eliot was, by tradition or, as Yeats was more fitfully, by aristocracy. Because the modern world is confused, Lewis and Auden and Spender have been. But they have seen, clearly enough, the things that are wrong with it, and they have found in a revolutionary outlook a way of pushing toward the future. At least they once did. What the war has done to them I do not know, and Mr. Daiches for the most part does not say.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

Brutocracy Versus Plutocracy

THE REVOLUTION IS ON. By M. W. Fodor. Houghton Mifflin and Company. $2.75.

REVOLUTIONS, unlike wars, are the glamour girls of history. They appear to us as an outbreak of a suppressed ideology or an oppressed people and not merely a a craving for power. Erroneous as this conception occasionally is, it accounts for the failure of comments on the war to mention the revolution behind or linked with the hateful mass massacre.

No doubt a "revolution is on," and gratitude is due to Mr. Fodor for telling us this truth, though we may not share his view of the revolution's goal. Eight chapters of his book, nearly half of it, are splendid journalistic work. The author gathered his facts on the spot with great personal pluck and cleverness. Whether or not we share his opinion that treason

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and strategic mistakes must bear the brunt of responsibility for the disaster in Flanders, his observations contribute in various ways to a new version of the events leading up to it.

In the second, equally fascinating, half of his book Mr. Fodor propounds the following theses: (1) the current revolution is the child of the French Revolution, "continuing its great equalizing process"; (2) the three European revolutions have the same objective—National Socialism; (3) all aim at the restoration of past glory, that is, the glory of ancient Rome, of the Holy Roman Empire, or of the dreams of Peter the Great; (4) these revolutionary regimes, a product of George Sorel's "direct action," "are actually socialistic." How the three "isms" qualify in political theory depends largely on the terms "revolution" and "socialism," but Fodor's over-simplification has the unquestionable merit of stressing the point that events on the other hemisphere are not just more of Europe's "eternal struggles" or a "struggle against the pluto-democracies," as the fascists and Communists of this country respectively allege to excuse their mutual intimacy with the arch-enemy.

In her introduction to Fodor's book Dorothy Thompson suggests that the author "gives the Nazis too much credit as a revolutionary force," when there is in truth nothing behind Hitlerism "but old-fashioned pan-Germanism and a brutal desire to replace existing plutocratic interests by a Germanic monopoly state capitalism." Careful scrutiny of the three current revolutions reveals neither a common French ancestry nor a common socialist goal. The French Revolution overthrew feudal absolutism; industrial capitalism, flourishing on its ruins for almost a century, was certainly no revolution. Still less are the current revolutions descendants of the French equalizing process—the author himself emphasizes their "anti-equalitarian nature." In his recently published study of revolution Robert Hunter concludes that "revolutions commence in anarchy and end in dictatorship, which is usually their final phase." It may be that the present ones, starting as dictatorships, are going to end in anarchy. Remembering, however, John Morley's remark that "the first act of the revolutionary play cannot be understood until the curtain has fallen on the fifth," we had better abstain from further meddling in the disagreement between the author and his introducer.

At any rate a revolution is on, not a new form of government as American appeasers still seem to believe, inspired by the hope that out of gratitude for this misnomer the dictators will protect their vested interests in Europe. Mr. Fodor is probably right in presuming that in Central Europe the revolution brought about by the first World War "had merely gone underground." However, in some of these countries the "revolution" was merely the flight of the rulers from the responsibility for the defeat. Nevertheless, behind the "dynamic gangsterism," in Dorothy Thompson's words, of the dictatorships, latent revolutions do exist. What are their aims?

In Mr. Fodor's view, since "three major states have at least put socialism into practice," socialism is supposed to be the revolutionary objective. Conceding the "totalitarian" dislike of plutocracy, anti-capitalism does not necessarily imply socialism, which in its ultimate sublimation means at all events the primacy of human life and of human dignity over

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material interests. It is Mr. Fodor's opinion that the totalitarian regimes "can be described as state socialist experiments" because "if capitalism is owned and controlled by one supreme body, the state, then it becomes socialism."

I venture to disagree. Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin are merely personifying the Hegelian idea of an all-powerful state. Furthermore, it would be a desecration of the idea to characterize as socialist a juggernaut crushing enslaved laborers under its wheels. And I wonder if in the socialist state there would be "infamously long working hours," if the workers, instead of sharing the profits, would be fed with "strength through joy" and dreams of racial supremacy and imperial power. Not even the disappearance of "all basis of morality" is a test of socialism. The Shavian assumption that some form of despotism is the logical conclusion of "intelligent Marxism" does not mean that what neo-despotism has thus far produced is socialism, no matter whether Herr Thyssen dislikes it or not.

This erroneous approach, however, does not destroy the value of Mr. Fodor's book. Most interesting are his descriptions of totalitarian nationalism and his advice to American youth to watch the revolution but to keep out of it. The cockles of our hearts are warmed by his wishful thought that masses revolting for freedom with the aid of tanks and planes might defeat the oppressors.

But what next? There is an answer in Dorothy Thompson's—pardon me for the pleonasm—brilliant introduction. "Men who are still thinking in the terms of the nineteenth century . . . of money profit as the measure of value and who praise an individualism which puts personal advantage over any other consideration whatsoever . . . are incapable of envisioning a more reasonable, civilized, just, and beautiful universe, and unwilling to assume the responsibility for creating it." May her words stand not merely as an introduction to Fodor's book but as an introduction to the future of America!

RUSTEM VAMBERY

Sensibility and Luggage

THE EXPENSE OF GREATNESS. By R. P. Blackmur. Arrow Editions. $3.

MR. BLACKMUR is a good critic because he is serious, and has both sensibilities and intellectual subtlety. He has, it is true, in a marked degree, the faults of these virtues. His seriousness is often invalidated by the web of super-seriousness he tends to spin from it. His sensibilities are not always searching enough; he can hedge around with them, and miss the point, while using them with scientific precision. And his subtlety often enervates rather than reveals. He has, as well, extreme faults of style. It is important to deal with his virtues first, because they are the particular ones they are—rare at any time and practically extinct at the moment.

Although he can be completely wrong on matters situated on what he himself would call "the periphery," Blackmur is frequently beautifully right in matters situated at the center. He knows that a work of art is a complex product of human growth and suffering (although he does not quite manage to say this in his aphorism, "Death is the expense

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of life and failure the expense of greatness"). He is the direct opposite of the critic who throws off banal middle-class remarks to comfort a middle-class audience. He recognizes and admires "speed" in apprehension and expression, while he himself works with great patience and, sometimes, maddening slowness, around, above, and through his subject. He lugs in moral standards to strengthen his critical weight; but these really do not matter, because, as with all sensitive critics, his reactions are at bottom instinctive. He knows what is serious even in American art; and there has been serious American art in spite of the tendency, at present, to push it back and keep it at folk level. Blackmur, fortunately, is the sort of person who instinctively knows that there is a difference between a lyric poem written by a great lyric poet and a Mother Goose song; between a piece of *grillage* of a high period and a well-made doorknob or frying-pan; between Bach's B minor Mass and "Ballad for Americans"; between a song by, say, Hugo Wolf and the most beautiful folksong ever invented by anybody. He knows that the novels written by John Steinbeck, Richard Wright, Herman Melville, and Henry James differ greatly. He knows that "all things excellent are as difficult as they are rare." And he is the kind of person who would never be able to deny knowing all this.

Blackmur, however, has serious lacunae in his special knowledge. And he carries an impeding, almost crippling, amount of extra baggage in the form of a whole critical vocabulary taken over from the moral philosophy so popular in English and American universities since the last war. If Blackmur made a determined effort to throw out of his vocabulary, for good, such words as "synergical," "sordor," "anterior," "quotidian," and, most especially, "heuristic," it would be all to the good. The terms from moral philosophy too, tend to reduce some of his passages to pure Swaheli; the result of superimposing these terms on literary analysis is more befuddling than clarifying. And they are not native to Blackmur's cast of mind; when he lets himself go he tends to think in images. This philosophic apparatus, moreover, is manipulated, often, with a kind of swank unbecoming to a sincere critic.

As his perceptions, for some reason, are likely to be good or bad in alternation, his courage, too, often wavers. He can be courageously offhand and even—surprisingly—flip in dealing with obviously bad poets; on the other hand, he treads rather carefully, mincing every statement into the minutest segments, in order to get around saying something directly damning about someone who, by reason of established position or what not, is not quite attackable. Using his own methods alone, he can be triumphantly right and revealing, in the case of T. E. Lawrence (this essay, in spite of its almost impenetrable structure and style, is the best in the book), while remaining incomplete and even biased in the cases of Yeats and Hardy. He can be both wrong and right, as in the case of Emily Dickinson. Here he does stand up, with a good deal of spunk, for a decent edition of Dickinson's works. But on the other hand, because of what he does not take in, he misinterprets the reasons for her poetry, leaving out whole tracts of her circumstances, such as her psychic slavery to her father. He brings in James, Dostoevski, Gide, and Mann in discussing a novel by Frances Frost. He

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can be bemused by the specious importance of both Henry and Marian Adams. He can, as well, write paragraphs of fine good sense and delicate analysis, such as the paragraph devoted to the proposition, "Assenting to experience is the basis of conviction."

A perusal of some intense, personal, non-philosophic criticism, of the sort contained, for example, in Flaubert's "Correspondence" would do Mr. Blackmur a good deal of good. French criticism of all periods might help him to overcome the more annoying—to the reader—coils and tangles of his subtlety. But he is on the side of the angels, and only needs more impatience, more courage, and perhaps ten more years of varied experience and wider reading, to make him a critic of imposing stature and of the first order.

LOUISE BOGAN

The Tone of Time

SAPPHIRA AND THE SLAVE GIRL. By Willa Cather. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

THE boy who told the story of "My Antonia," finding himself transported from Virginia to the prairies of Nebraska, said, "I had the feeling that the world was left behind, that we had got over the edge of it, and were outside man's jurisdiction. I had never before looked up at the sky when there was not a familiar mountain ridge against it." For thirty years Miss Cather found her clue to the heroic values of life in that Western world of open plains and pioneer struggle; now she goes back, for the first time in her literary career, beyond her Nebraska girlhood to the Virginia of her earliest memories, to a country of older laws and severer customs—to Back Creek Valley west of the Blue Ridge and to the house of Henry Colbert, the miller, and his wife Sapphira, a Dodderidge of Loudon County. The story offers the familiar features of her earlier books: there is the retreat to the past—here 1856—when human dignity and honor were not yet outlawed by the cheap principles and vulgar comforts of modern times; there is the idealizing pathos of distance and lost beauty; there is an epilogue that brings the story twenty-five years nearer—but only to 1881—when time has dissolved old conflicts, clarified their mystery, and healed old wounds by its touch of grace and humility. There is a stoic husband, asking no questions of an unkind destiny; there is an imperious wife who finds herself exiled in the backwoods as earlier heroines like Marian Forrester and Myra Henshawe were exiled in the rough country of the West, self-confounded by her pride and fear of truth, defeating herself rather than allow victory or happiness to others, yet who must finally say, like the woman in Katherine Anne Porter's story, "I was right not to be afraid of any thief but myself, who will end by leaving me nothing"; there is also a young girl, the Negro slave Nancy, on whom Sapphira vents her defeat and jealousy, another embodiment of the spirit of youth and natural grace which appeared before in Alexandra, Thea, Antonia, Tom Outland, and Lucy Gayheart—the pure in heart whom no evil can ever defeat wholly and on whom Miss Cather fixes for her faith in experience in an age of warring egoisms and debasing ambition.

Miss Cather has risked not only a repetition of characters

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and effects in which her expertness has already passed from mastery to mere formulation; she has duplicated her matter and pathos so narrowly as to make unavoidable the sensation that what was once a sincere and vigorous theme has been subjected to a further attenuation of sentimental argument and special pleading. This effect is emphasized by the insistent plainness and simplicity of manner to which she adheres—that conscious simplicity which at times (in "My Antonia," "A Lost Lady," and "Death Comes for the Archbishop") she has raised to a point of intensity and lyric poignance that forms the only real approximation to Turgenev and Gogol in American fiction, but which on other occasions ("One of Ours," "Shadows on the Rock," "Lucy Gayheart") has lapsed either into an inert and nerveless dulness or into a sentimentality that begs the whole question of creating and substantiating character by means of words, sensation, and observed detail.

Her devotion to the past and its perished beauty has been sincere but inevitably limited by a didactic principle and threatened by the inflexibility of an idealistic convention. Only when her sentiment is toughened by psychological or atmospheric realism has she brought off her pathos successfully, and only when her idealizations have been grounded in a hard sense of physical and regional fact have they missed banality and abstraction. To reread the whole of her work, as I have just done, is to realize how deliberately she has faced her risks in order to win her prizes. It is to see that the subtlety and scope of her themes ("The Professor's House," "My Mortal Enemy") have often failed to find the structure and substance that would give them life and so must remain at the level of a sketch; it is to realize that her novels reduce to a single motive and pattern whose sincerity is undeniable but rudimentary and soon becomes threadbare, repeatedly exposed by a meagerness of texture and sensible realization; but it is to admit at last that in her finest books Miss Cather has brought to a kind of heroic climax and genuine epic meaning the work of the American women who preceded her (Rose Terry Cooke, Sarah Orne Jewett, Mrs. Freeman) and that she has sublimated to its elements a conception of pioneer life which in other hands has generally lapsed into vulgar romanticism and blatant American eloquence.

"Sapphira," by recovering the gravity and lyric ease of her best work and by avoiding the flat prettification of history that nullified "Shadows on the Rock," is Miss Cather's best book in thirteen years and one of the five best of her production. It shows in its central character the tangible passion and struggle, in its secondary characters the honest virtue and credible humility, and in its general atmosphere of fear and obsession a dramatic force that lift the tale out of its exaggerated moralism and dramatic simplicity into its own kind of truth and power. Its people rise above the flat dimensions of moral humors, and there are passages—Nancy's terror, Henry's struggle with his first consciousness of love for her, Sapphira's final surrender—that remind us how much integrity of word and effect is required to justify the hairbreadth compromises with melodrama and sentiment which Miss Cather risks and how she is one of the two or three masters who remain to us in this kind of art. They also remind us that in defining the spiritual forces that have gone

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The Man Who Leads China

CHIANG KAI-SHEK: MARSHAL OF CHINA. By Sven Hedin. The John Day Company. $3.

A BOOK on Chiang Kai-shek by the distinguished Swedish explorer, Sven Hedin, is an event of some importance. Although Chiang Kai-shek ranks with Gandhi, and possibly Nehru, as one of the few men of this generation in Asia whose position in history is secure, no satisfactory biography of him has yet appeared. His own writings, while significant, are of little aid to the average Westerner who wishes to understand him. Oddly enough, his wife, as a result of her excellent knowledge of English, is far better known and understood in this country than the Generalissimo himself.

Sven Hedin has been a frequent visitor to China for more than forty years. Like most Westerners who have become intimately acquainted with the country and its people, he is deeply attached to China and the Chinese. He has known and admired Chiang Kai-shek for more than a dozen years. Perhaps because of this chronological sequence, his book is more about China than it is about the Marshal, as he prefers to call Chiang. And, by and large, it is a good review of recent Chinese history. The broad outline of events during the past dozen or so years is enlivened by stories of Sven Hedin's personal experiences and those of his associates. Many of these experiences have to do with the little-known but highly strategic parts of China which he knows best—Sinkiang and Inner and Outer Mongolia. These personal stories, including those told him by others, constitute the most valuable part of the book—material which, in many cases, cannot be found elsewhere.

As a biography of China's great war leader, the book, unfortunately, contributes little in information and less in interpretation. Chiang's career is consistently painted in exaggerated terms. His virtues are magnified; his faults ignored. History is repeatedly altered to justify Chiang's role in it, or to cover up his mistakes. The story of his kidnapping at Sian, for example, has been told six or seven times in recent books; but in none, except possibly Chiang's own report, is there a more naive or inaccurate interpretation of events during those historic days. The bloody days at Shanghai in 1927, when Chiang first bolted the Kuomintang revolution, are completely ignored, as is the butchering of tens of thousands of peasants in his subsequent anti-Communist campaign. Having ignored the days when Chiang was on the side of black reaction in China, Sven Hedin naturally fails to explain the peculiar concatenation of circumstances by which Chiang subsequently emerged as leader

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of a unified China, in which he has faithfully and loyally preserved the united front with the Communists against tremendous odds. It is unfortunate that one who has seen and loved China as Sven Hedin undoubtedly has should have understood so little of the hidden events of these historic years. Despite this handicap he has written a book which no student of China can afford to ignore.

MAXWELL S. STEWART

The Roots of Anti-Semitism

THE GREAT HATRED. By Maurice Samuel. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

JEWISH FATE AND FUTURE. By Arthur Ruppin. Translated by E. W. Dickes. The Macmillan Company. $4.

IT WAS just three years ago that I spoke about Hitler with George Lansbury at his home in the East End of London. He had recently returned from a long interview with the Nazi dictator, whom he had begged to keep peace. " 'E was quoite a noice chap," said Old George, "and made me put me leg up on the sofa when 'e learned of my lumbago. But when I mentioned the Jews 'e 'it the ceiling. 'Is eyes popped out of 'is 'ead; 'e slobbered at the mouth."

Why was this so? Was it to be explained simply as another case of dementia praecox? This would be a strange aberration for the most coldly calculating mind of the twentieth century. And what shall be said about the millions of Germans who possess the same feelings—and about the anti-Semitism of Mussolini, the Iron Guard of Rumania, and Father Coughlin and his Christian Front? To say that they are deranged is at best to beg the question. What, then, is the nature of their derangement, and why is it directed against the Jews? Maurice Samuel answers these questions in one of the most eloquent books ever written about the Jewish problem.

He establishes the distinction in the first place between the great hatred and the normal difficulties encountered by minorities. Differences in *mores,* the dislike of the unlike, produce tensions which are part of the everyday experience of mankind. As they affect the Jews, Samuel refers to them as anti-Jewish sentiment. But the Nazi creed is not ordinary anti-Jewish sentiment. Listen to Goebbels—"This is the world enemy, the destroyer of civilization"; and to Hitler—"If the Jew conquers the nations of this world, his crown will become the funeral wreath of humanity, and once again this planet, empty of mankind, will move through the ether as it did thousands of years ago."

Obviously these are not like other expressions of racial or religious hatred, not like expressions of Franco-German, German-Polish, or Japanese-American antagonism. "We have left the 'normal' field of human enmity," the author concludes, "and entered the realm of the primitive demonological." If not, he asks, "Why has it become a world cult of such extraordinary power? And whence does it derive its characteristic tone, a terrified and driveling diabolism, absent from all other instances of group intolerance and inaccessible to ordinary modes of discourse?"

And why this fanaticism against the Jews? Because Nazi anti-Semitism is the heart of a world cult "to put an end to

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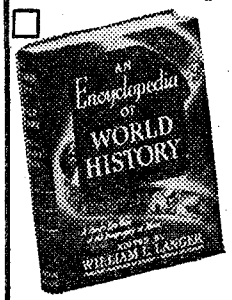

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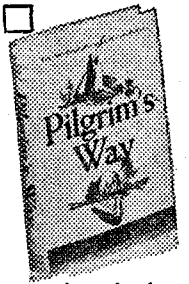

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the Christian episode in human history." The philosophy of force which has culminated in National Socialism finds in the life and teachings of Christ, the Jew, the one insuperable obstacle to victory. There was a remarkable substantiation of this thesis in a dispatch from non-Christian Japan which appeared in the New York *Times* of September 25. The Tokyo Federation to Campaign against Christian Organizations passed a resolution branding Christianity as "a device of Jewish origin which is encroaching on the Japanese spirit and must be eliminated." The resolution also said that Christianity "forces men to believe in Jesus Christ in the interests of the Jewish policy of world conquest." And this in a country where the number and influence of Jews are negligible. Maurice Samuel feels that this fanatical fear-hatred of the Judeo-Christian humanitarian morality, not economic or political motives, explains the Nazis' burning of synagogues, their desecration of Jewish cemeteries, their deliberate pursuit of refugees.

This is a valuable contribution to an understanding of the most stubborn and baffling problem of the ages. However, Mr. Samuel has, I believe, oversimplified the subject. Can we dismiss the economic factors when we recall that the most recent wave of anti-Semitism occurred during the severest depression in modern times? And can we be certain that anti-Semitism is not as much derived from Christianity as directed against it? Here, for example, is the concluding section on the Crucifixion in Bishop Gilmour's "Bible History," which is used in thousands of Christian religious schools: "For eighteen hundred years has the blood of Christ been upon the Jews. Driven from Judea—without country, without home, strangers among strangers, hated, yet feared —have they wandered, bearing with them the visible signs of God's curse. Like Cain, they shall continue to wander till the end of the world." It was this conception of the Jew which Hitler, Mussolini, and the leaders of the Christian Front absorbed in their childhood.

"The Great Hatred," however, does prove the fundamentally anti-Christian character of Nazi anti-Semitism and thus becomes, as Thomas Mann has written, "a valuable weapon for everyone concerned with defending the bases of our Western Christian morality." It demonstrates something else equally significant: "What happens to the Jews as a group is not of special importance in the world tragedy. But that which is concealed in anti-Semitism is the fate of civilization." For some strange reason destiny has chosen the Jew to be the symbol of the struggle between progress and reaction in the modern world. By rallying to his defense, Christian civilization can save itself. That is what many Jews tried to tell Christian statesmen before the outbreak of the present war, but to no avail. Now it has become painfully clear that the failure to perceive Nazi anti-Semitism as the spearhead of the assault on the most precious values of Western civilization was a weakness as catastrophic as Munich.

Arthur Ruppin also discusses the Jewish problem, but with the greater objectivity of a scientist. For he is the head of the Department of Sociology at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and is generally considered the foremost authority on the sociology of the Jews. He here analyzes the complex factors which constitute the Jewish problem, but he is too wise a student to offer a final solution. He does, however,

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suggest temporary expedients, such as "emigration to any country not closed against immigrants, change of occupation, and birth control." He offers as the most constructive approach to the problem the upbuilding of the Jewish national home in Palestine.

His book is most useful as a comprehensive survey of the legal, economic, and cultural situation of the Jews today. It is not polemical but factual. And the facts which emerge contain the inspiring story of a people that in every age has suffered oppression but has survived by dint of its indomitable will to live. That will to live is now facing the severest test it has ever undergone, for half of the Jews in Europe, where ten of the seventeen million Jews of the world dwell, are in Nazi concentration camps and the other half are in the spiritual desolation of Soviet Russia. The same facts, however, offer the hope that the Jewish people will survive.

PHILIP S. BERNSTEIN

Abraham Flexner

I REMEMBER. The Autobiography of Abraham Flexner. Simon and Schuster. $3.75.

MEN who amass great fortunes—the Carnegies, Rockefellers, and others—become household names. Anonymity is too often the lot of those who, like Abraham Flexner, zestfully deprive these men of their millions, skilfully direct their philanthropies, and so return to society what society has yielded up to them. Whether, in the long run, society gets the better of the bargain may be an open question; it is evident, however, that with Flexner in the offing a millionaire and his money were soon parted.

This autobiography is far more than a delightfully anecdotal account of Flexner's encounters with fabulously wealthy men, and in this sense the excerpts that recently appeared in *Harper's* are misleading. The book is also an impassioned tribute by a son of German-Jewish immigrant parents to the country which made possible his distinguished career. Beyond that, it is an important historical résumé of his association with the Johns Hopkins University during its golden age, the Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations in the period of their profound influence upon American universities and medical schools, and the Institute for Advanced Study established ten years ago at Princeton.

Many persons who are aware of Flexner's important contributions in one field are surprised to learn of his significant work in others. A venture in progressive education when Flexner was twenty-one, and before those words became a slogan, led him ultimately to found the Lincoln School. His first book, "The American College" (1908), stirred hardly an echo; but "Universities" (1930) exerted a profound influence at a time when Schulz at Reed, Meiklejohn at Wisconsin, Aydelotte at Swarthmore, and others were grappling with spoon-feeding, sterility, and over-organization in higher education. Another study, "Prostitution in Europe," paved the way for Raymond Fosdick's important "European Police Systems."

Flexner's most spectacular and possibly most significant role was that of lay critic and reformer of medical education. His exposure (1910) of third-rate medical schools was sensa-

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tional; "such a rattling of dead bones has never been heard in this country before or since." Among the 155 schools then in existence, the worst "collapsed to the right and left, usually without a murmur"; so that in 1940 we have but 67 Class A schools. Later, in controlling large grants for medical education, Flexner followed relentlessly his ideal of high scientific standards and the somewhat mooted "full-time clinical teaching."

The author views himself with rare objectivity. "I cannot see," he says, "that I have pursued anything but an opportunistic source. I was not a philosopher. I had in my make-up something of a practical idealist. . . . I have been far too busy, and I have carried far too heavy a weight of practical responsibility, to spend much time in subjective thinking." It is often true that those who are essentially men of action become self-conscious when they come to speak of the more intimate and subjective aspects of their lives. One finds this in the first few chapters of Flexner's book, where he gives his *credo* and pays tribute to parents, brothers, and wife. Readers may find this awkward if not a little banal, and there is a didactic note that is dissonant with all that follows. The rest, however, is characterized by wit and warm humor, generous praise for colleagues, and reverence for the great scientists and scholars, here and abroad, whose advice he sought and whose work, in many instances, he so greatly facilitated. A modern Socrates, Flexner has been midwife to scholarship and intellectual achievement.

DOUGLASS W. ORR

Our Military Problems

BATTLE SHIELD OF THE REPUBLIC. By Major Malcolm Wheeler-Nicholson. The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

MORE time should have been taken with this book, for a critical examination of our military problems is at present definitely required. There was, however, no need for the constant and somewhat irrelevant expressions of opinion regarding the present war, most of which this reviewer found to be quite fantastic. Major Wheeler-Nicholson, who has long been a campaigner for army reform, should have seen that his book would have been much improved by more attention to organization.

Ignoring the excellent work of General John McAuley Palmer and others, Major Wheeler-Nicholson holds that no adequate criticism of our military situation has appeared since General Emory Upton's classic "Military Policy of the United States." Since he is a follower of Upton, his book suffers from the usual defects attendant upon the acceptance of that body of thought. A great many of the criticisms contained in "Battle Shield of the Republic" are penetrating and deserving of attention, but the author places too much faith in certain sure cures and panaceas.

For example, one reform which he constantly advocates is the substitution of promotion by merit for promotion by seniority, the system which at present prevails in the army. The fact is brought out that Grant, a very able soldier, would never have arrived at the top had he been forced to depend on promotion by seniority. Specifically Major Wheeler-Nicholson contends that an officer's promotion should be made "dependent upon the comparative record of performance of the unit which he commands." Unfortunately, history demonstrates that no system of promotion can be consistently counted upon to bring good officers to the top; merit tests, like intelligence tests, do not always reveal the best man. Officers with brilliant peace-time records frequently fail in war, and the contrary is equally true. Actual war is the only real test, and it may be remarked that Grant would also have failed to come up under the merit system of promotion.

Again, Major Wheeler-Nicholson has an almost romantic belief in the principle of unity of command. If our national defense were unified under one head, the author believes that all would be well. Yet the Great War of 1914-18 was won by the side which was least unified in command. Before the present war the French had unified their national defense as much as could be desired, but unification failed to be of perceptible assistance. It is apparent that it is on the capabilities of the several individuals at the top rather than on the merits of any particular system that a nation must place its main reliance for security in war.

However, many of Major Wheeler-Nicholson's comments are very sound. "It is time the army came closer to the people," he remarks; and again, "Billions for defense without one cent's worth of brains are going to get us nowhere by the shortest available route." These are the things that make "Battle Shield of the Republic" well worth reading.

HARVEY S. FORD

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IN BRIEF

THE ANCIENT GREEKS. By William Kelly Prentice. Princeton University Press. $3.

A great many of the traditional beliefs about the Greeks have been discredited by modern investigation, but many still prevail. This book contains in concentrated form the fruits of forty years of study and teaching by the emeritus Ewing professor of the Greek language and literature at Princeton and is designed to bring the educated layman up to date and to suggest new interpretations to scholars. As befits its purpose, it is both scholarly and readable.

SUMNER TODAY. Selected Essays by William Graham Sumner. Edited by Maurice R. Davie. Yale University Press. $2.50.

"The Forgotten Man" and other essays by the "Darwin of sociology," with commentaries by moderns ranging from Bruce Barton to Charles Beard and John Chamberlain, make up a volume published in honor of the centenary of Sumner's birth. After honor is paid where honor is due, the impression remains that Sumner is definitely out of date, and must have seemed so to progressive minds even when these essays were written.

JOHN COTTON DANA. By Frank Kingdon. Newark: The Public Library and Museum. $3.

The president of the University of Newark has written a dignified, intimate biography of the late distinguished head of the Newark Library and Museum. Dana was a pioneer in developing the relation of the library to the educational progress of the community; he deserved this little monument.

THE AMERICAN EMPIRE. Edited by William H. Haas. University of Chicago Press. $4.

A symposium dealing with our territories and possessions from the traditional geographical point of view does not promise much; and this volume does not provide much. The authors reassert that our haphazard collection of "colonies" are of dubious value, very expensive to maintain, and poorly administered. They are vaguely aware that naval strategy furnishes the most compelling reason for acquiring, retaining, and expanding such possessions, but they hardly discuss this reason. Political, economic, and social aspects of the subject are meagerly treated. Considering the interest inherent in the material, and its special current importance, it is regrettable to find this a very dull book, with few claims to the attention of either the general reader or the specialist.

DRAMA

At Last

"THE CORN IS GREEN" (National Theater) is the first new play of the season to get a really enthusiastic reception in the press and to look like a hit of something approaching first-class proportions. The author is the English—or rather Welsh—actor and playwright, Emlyn Williams, best known here for his performance in his own murder thriller "Night Must Fall." The star is Ethel Barrymore; the plot concerned with the relations between a determined spinster who sets up her own school in a remote Welsh mining village and the young genius whom she discovers there. In London, where the play was a great success, Mr. Williams took the role of the youth—forcefully played here by Richard Waring—and the story is said to be autobiographical, at least to the extent that Mr. Williams himself was a Welsh boy who, like his hero, won a scholarship for Oxford.

Certainly the piece is not especially novel or especially searching. In fact, it passes rapidly over the incident concerning the momentary rebellion of the youth against the intellectual forcing process to which he is subjected, and it elaborates at great length the incident involving the child born to the village seductress, despite the fact that the latter is familiar theatrical stuff while the former affords the best opportunity of the evening for an original psychological study. But if the play is neither novel nor searching it is human and sincere, and the fact that it is continuously interesting is probably due less to any single outstanding excellence than to the cumulative effect of various simple virtues in the writing and the acting as well as in the general conception.

Few people would be inclined in advance to suppose that a play based upon a social worker's enthusiasm for the three R's was very promising for Broadway, especially since a simple faith in education as a panacea went out of fashion a long time ago. That it actually did find a warm welcome on Broadway is due partly, no doubt, to the fact that the author can speak with the conviction of experience, even more to the fact that he has written a play a good deal brighter and livelier and more cheerful than an outline of the plot would suggest. And he has been able to do that because he has known how to translate his theme into easy theatrical terms without losing the effect of sincerity.

As a matter of fact, "The Corn Is Green" moves pleasantly and easily along because it is about as conventional in method and structure as a play can well be without coming to seem obtrusively according to formula. It begins where one expects it to begin with the arrival of the new would-be teacher, and it introduces both the expected comic servant and the expected opposition in the form of the Tory landowner. Presently temptation enters with the serio-comic seductress just at the moment when a complication is needed, and, finally, the seductress reappears to announce the inevitable baby exactly at the point where any textbook would tell you a last complication is needed. But if Mr. Williams is obviously a man of the theater who is by no means above using tried and true methods, the fact that he is here dealing with material real and important to himself keeps the play from ever becoming as merely theatrical as it might easily be. Add thoroughly sound performances not only by the principals already mentioned but also by all the supporting cast—especially Rosalind Ivan as the comic servant and Thelma Schnee as her daughter, the congenital tart—and you get a sum total which might not seem as important in a richer theatrical season as it does just now but which would, in any year, have a substantial claim to attention.

"Fledgling" (Hudson Theater) attempts quite a little more and accomplishes somewhat less. It is based on a novel called "Follow the Furies" by Eleanor Carroll Chilton, and it is exceptionally solemn as well as almost painfully austere. There is, to be sure, a "mercy killing" and a suicide, but the intention is not melodrama. It is, instead, high tragedy and the presentation of an ethical problem—the problem of God in the modern world and the tragedy which those who think they can live without Him bring down upon themselves. The heroine, in all the pride of her rationalist's creed, drops poison in the medicine prepared for her hopelessly paralyzed mother and then kills herself when she discovers that she

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>
> DR. FRANK KINGDON
> *at The Nation's Seventy-fifth Anniversary Dinner*
> *May first, Nineteen hundred and forty*

Christmas, dedicated to peace and good will among men, comes this year into a world of war and misery. Yet never has this holiday seemed to us to hold more meaning. To men of good will everywhere it brings fresh hope that decency and justice will not perish. To those who are fighting against tyranny and the rigidity of outworn institutions, it brings renewed determination that out of their effort "the good society shall yet be born."

Dr. Kingdon's affirmation has such timeliness that we have chosen it for *The Nation's* Christmas card announcing gift subscriptions. To the principles it proclaims we have pledged our strength. We urge you to join us in making *The Nation's* voice a still stronger voice. Won't you help us to carry our message of hope and determination to an ever increasing number of thinking Americans by giving *The Nation* as a holiday gift?

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needs someone to give her the absolution which neither her atheist father nor her own soul can pronounce.

Given powerful-enough treatment, the theme might serve for a great play; treated crudely enough, it would certainly make a preposterous one; but "Fledgling" is neither near to greatness nor quite absurd. The writing is neither powerful nor crude. It is merely highbrow. In fact, everything about the play is highbrow, and the chill of complacent intellectuality lies cold upon it. Despite all the sensational action included, it moves at a snail's pace and moves thus, one feels, not because the author cannot make it move faster, but because he is anxious to show that he is writing for people who, like himself, are above the vulgarity of impatience. Where passionate conviction is called for, one gets complacency; where deep emotion should burst forth, only an almost priggish correctness appears; and the result is to make the spectator mildly resentful when he ought to be moved. A young ingenue named Sylvia Weld, who is playing her first lead in New York, does a good job, but "Fledgling" is much too solemn and much too all-embracingly worthy to be really good.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

MUSIC

LISTENING to Schönberg's "Pierrot Lunaire"—superbly done at a recent New Friends concert by Erika Wagner-Stiedry and a small group of players under Schönberg's own direction—caused me to think of Picasso's Guernica Postscripts: what each series is concerned with, it seems to me, what each makes artistically concrete in its own way, its own artistic terms, is tortured human sensibilities. But with this similarity there are differences. There is, to begin with, the difference in the source, the character of the torture that each artist is concerned with—in the one case interior decay, disintegration; in the other externally applied violence and cruelty. There is also the difference in the quality of the experience and emotion that each artist brings to his subject; and the difference, finally, in the two ways, the two sets of artistic terms in which the artists make what they perceive and what they feel about it artistically concrete. It is these differences that make Schönberg's "Pierrot" a masterfully contrived thing of horror, and Picasso's Postscripts constructively, affirmatively powerful works of art—possibly the most powerful works produced by a painter since Cézanne, possibly even the most powerful produced by any artist in any medium in that period.

Among the notable artistic achievements of the period have been the works that artists in different media have produced together—ballets like "Petrouchka," "Les Noces," "The Prodigal Son," "Harnassie." To say this is to place Fokine and Nijinska on a level, in creative imagination and originality, with Stravinsky; Balanchine with Prokofiev; Cieplinski with Szymanovski; and there are people who will not do that. Quite recently a writer—trained in music and sensitive to other arts than his own—expressed to me his inability to stand more than a few minutes of ballet because after that the sameness of the positions and movements became boring. He was thinking of a ballet like "Les Sylphides," and was confessing his inability to observe the differences in the personal styles with which the three ballerinas make those same movements of legs, arms, and bodies—differences which, communicating personality, temperament, emotion as they do, can be as exciting to some people as the differences in styles of tennis players are to others. Moreover, though able to appreciate the differences in the ways writers use the same words, composers the same sounds, painters the same colors, this man was unable to perceive the differences in the patterns created with those movements by Fokine in "Les Sylphides" and the patterns created by Petipa in "Swan Lake." Nor was he considering the difference between "Les Sylphides" and those works in which the traditional ballet movements are only part of a larger vocabulary of bodily movement that is a medium for individual creative imagination and style; and presumably he would not consider the differences between these works—between Fokine's "Petrouchka" and Balanchine's "Baiser de la fée," between this work of Balanchine and his "Cotillon"—considerable or important. But to me, as I observed them last spring and more recently, they were very considerable and very important; and in Balanchine's invention in particular I was made freshly aware of one of the most distinctive, impressive, and exciting of artistic minds—this not only in those strokes of imagination and wit that somebody I know once happily named "fantaisie Balanchine," but in the fascinating things he makes out of the traditional movements. The pas de deux of the twirling ballerina supported by male dancer that one sees in every classical ballet occurs in every work of Balanchine, but each time as something newly and beautifully imagined: it is the series of wonderfully strange movements of the "Hand of Fate" episode in "Cotillon"; it was the seduction, ending in the interlocking of the two bodies, in "The Prodigal Son." (I must add that much of the original detail of "Cotillon" is missing from the work as it is danced by the De Basil company nowadays, and that "The Prodigal Son" is being given with new choreography by Lichine in place of Balanchine's for Diaghilev's 1929 production. I should add also that Lichine, very grand as the company's choreographer, and aware that he is its only brilliant male dancer, is appearing in only one ballet each evening, assuring himself a personal triumph without any concern for the seriously decreased effectiveness of the other ballets. And this effectiveness is further decreased by an incompetent orchestra.)

Listen while you look at that strange pas de deux in "Cotillon," and you will hear the strangeness of Chabrier's music. This is one instance of what Lincoln Kirstein has pointed out so well in his discussion of Balanchine (pages 22-24 of "Blast At Ballet")— that Balanchine does not merely *use* music as a framework on which to pin movement, but that the movement begins and ends as an expression of his interest in, his feeling for the music, and that his musicianship is "esssentially, not literally poetic" —which is to say that the choreography is not a literal visualization of the patterns of sound. "He would never have been so naive as to reiterate the individual air-turns of the opening of the fourth movement of Massine's 'Choreartium,' where a brave attempt is made to connect the dance-steps with the initial ascendant chords of Brahms, [but] only up to the place where the symphonic structure becomes too complex for a choreographer to follow literally." Instead he exhibits "an extraordinary instinctive gift for finding the quality of coherent gesture to fit the exact shade of quality in the chosen music. . . . The gestures have a quality of independent rightness exhausting the motor impulses in the music and in the lyrical substructure of concepts on which the music is founded."

All this provides illuminating parallels for the consideration of what is done in "Fantasia"; but that will have to wait.

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Plain Words Wanted

Dear Sirs: The second paragraph in Miss Kirchwey's fine editorial To the President-elect should have been underlined in red ink. We are all "tired of large words." We want to know what they mean "in translation." There is nothing so soothing as a flow of fine words—and nothing so dangerous if we do not know to what actions they will lead.

Please permit an old *Nation* reader to express his wish that you will ask our political leaders ever more frequently and insistently, "Just what do you mean by this fine phrase?"

KARL F. MUENZINGER

Boulder, Colo., November 25

Mr. Nevins's "Rockefeller"

Dear Sirs: Because I am happy to count both Allan Nevins and Gustavus Myers among my friends, I deplore Mr. Myers's review of Mr. Nevins's recent book, "John D. Rockefeller: The Heroic Age of American Enterprise" (*The Nation,* November 9). Mr. Myers's reputation is secure as the historian of the great American railroad fortunes, but he is in error if he assumes that the formula he applied so tellingly in the case of the railroad barons ("huge stock waterings, stock jobbings, regular debauching of politics, great frauds and swindles, briberies, evasion and defiance of law," etc.) is equally applicable to our early industrial capitalists.

With Mr. Nevins's basic assumption —that Rockefeller's generation was the creative age of American capitalism—I am in complete agreement; indeed, it is one of the themes of my own recent book. Rather than being a carelessly contrived book, I think Mr. Nevins's is thoughtfully and sparely constructed. It is singularly free from prejudice; not a single nasty incident in its subject's career is glossed over or excused, and Rockefeller is revealed as the ruthlessly unfair business competitor that he was. To this extent, Rockefeller cannot be dissociated from the Goulds, Drews, and Fisks of his time.

But Rockefeller—like Carnegie, McCormick, Henry Ford later—was more than that. He was a great industrial innovator: he was constantly preoccupied with new techniques of production, he expanded his markets notably at home, he cut costs, reduced prices, and had no truck with the security-market manipulators at any time. His preeminence, like that of Carnegie in steel and McCormick in agricultural implements, was due to the fact that he conformed to the pattern of the enterpriser of classical economics.

I agree with Mr. Nevins that he was a member of the heroic age of industrial capitalism; I agree with Mr. Nevins (and so does Mr. Myers) that the advent of finance capitalism terminated this age. In such perspective, Mr. Nevins's biography of John D. Rockefeller is an outstanding contribution to American economic history.

LOUIS M. HACKER

New York, November 18

Dear Sirs: Mr. Hacker puts me in the position of implying that Mr. Nevins's "John D. Rockefeller" was a "carelessly contrived book." Quite the contrary, it was too well contrived in its purpose to make Rockefeller loom as a super-eminent personage, and to convert an age of grabbing into a "heroic age." Nor did I accuse Mr. Nevins of prejudice; my comments dealt with his *attitude,* which predetermined the texture of his treatment and conclusions. Furthermore, Mr. Nevins or Mr. Hacker notwithstanding, the practices that I outlined as prevailing in the period in question applied to industrialists as well as to railroad magnates, as was specifically shown in my book, which Mr. Hacker suggests applied to railroads only. Stock watering, as I said, might not be imputed to Standard Oil, but that company suctioned off the public's money just the same, making Rockefeller a billionaire and his colleagues multi-millionaires. Mergers and consolidations of other corporations were signalized by huge stock waterings, and a number by stock jobbing and other evils. This occurred before as well as after what is called the advent of finance capitalism.

If the myth of the "heroic age" is to be judged by the careers of the early industrialists, then the picture is not essentially different. McCormick lobbied a bill through Congress to extend harvester patent rights—the means he used were set forth in a report of a special Congressional investigating committee. The Carnegie fortune waxed great on secret railroad rebates, high tariff protection, and oppression of workers, as witness the great Homestead strike. The progress of various successful industrialists who became multi-millionaires ran along similar lines. Such were the times now thus transformed into the "heroic age." Obviously such a claim cannot be taken seriously.

What Mr. Hacker regards as the merit of industrialists, their ability to devise new modes of production, etc., only magnified their power to draw vast fortunes from the consumer. If that era was so "heroic," then generations of Americans have been sadly mistaken in proceeding against monopoly and intrenched and concentrated wealth.

GUSTAVUS MYERS

New York, November 25

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